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MADAGASCAR

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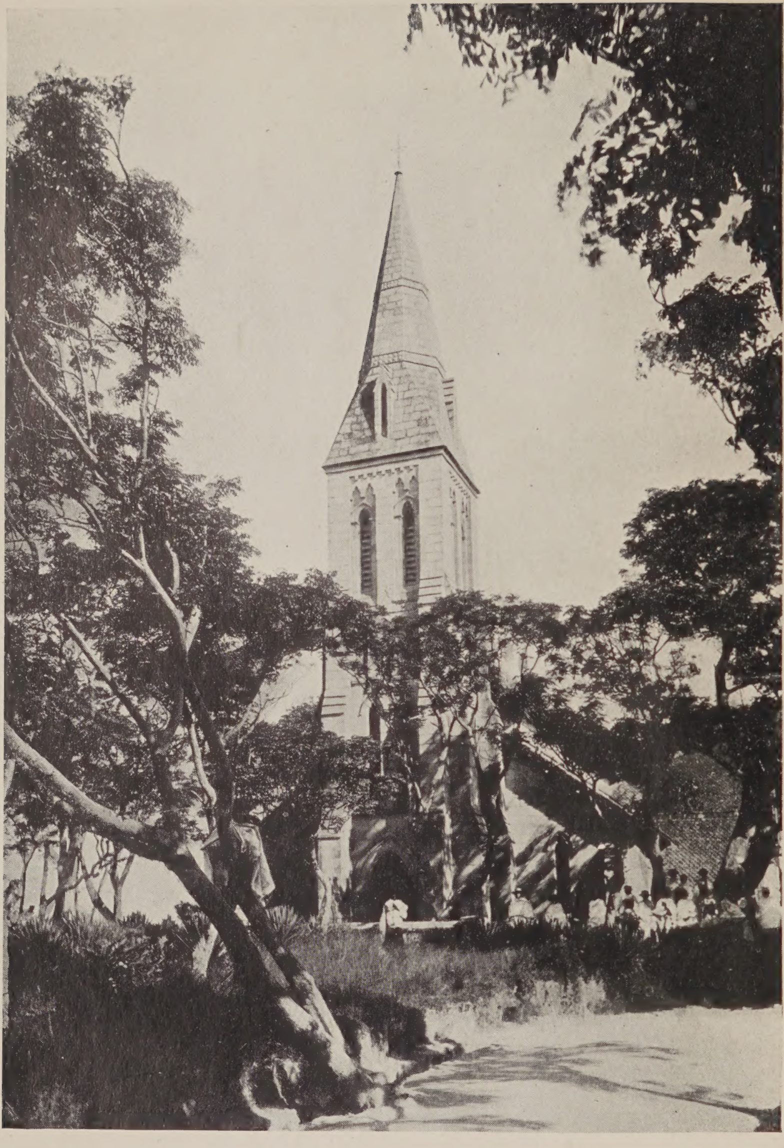

MARTYR MEMORIAL CHURCH, AMBÒHIPÒTSY, ANTANÀNARÌVO

FIFTY YEARS IN MADAGASCAR

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF MISSION LIFE AND WORK

BY

JAMES SIBREE, D.D., F.R.G.S.

Of the London Missionary Society, Membre de l'Acad. Malgache,
Author of "The Great African Island," "Madagascar before the Conquest," "A Naturalist in Madagascar," etc., etc.

WITH MAP AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

THIS is not my first book about Madagascar, but none of the dozen or so, large and small, which I have already written, take up exactly the points which form the chief subjects of the following pages, nor do any of the books written by some of my brother missionaries.

I believe, therefore, that the facts here given will be considered interesting, and as throwing light, not only on Christian and Church life among the Malagasy people, but also as a slight contribution to a wider history of missionary effort as a whole during the past fifty or sixty years.

The year 1920 was the hundredth anniversary of the commencement of Christian work in the great African island; and its history during the past century is another proof that the Gospel is still "the power of God unto salvation" wherever it is faithfully proclaimed.

I have had the singular privilege and joy of being allowed to labour in and for Madagascar for fifty-two years, and again in this country for more than eight years, so I hope that this record of some of my experiences during that long period may not be unacceptable to those who are doing their part in sending and taking the Gospel message to the unenlightened nations of the world.

J. S.

BROMLEY, KENT,
November 1923.

To the beloved memory of
my Missionary Brothers and Sisters in Madagascar
who have passed within the veil,
especially of
JOSEPH PEARSE, ANDREW DAVIDSON, CHARLES
JUKES, HENRY E. CLARK, JAMES CROSS THORNE,
CHRISTOPHER BORCHGREVINK, RICHARD
BARON, AND PERCY MILLEDGE,
this book is dedicated.

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NOTE.—Throughout this book Malagasy words are accented on the syllables which should be emphasised; and if it is borne in mind that the vowels *a*, *e* and *i* have as nearly as possible the same sound as in French or Italian, and that *o* is exactly like our English *o* in *do*, *to* and *move*, and that the consonants do not differ much in sound from those in English, except that *g* is always hard, *s* always a sibilant and not like *z*, and *j* is like *dj*, there will be no difficulty in pronouncing words with a fair degree of accuracy.

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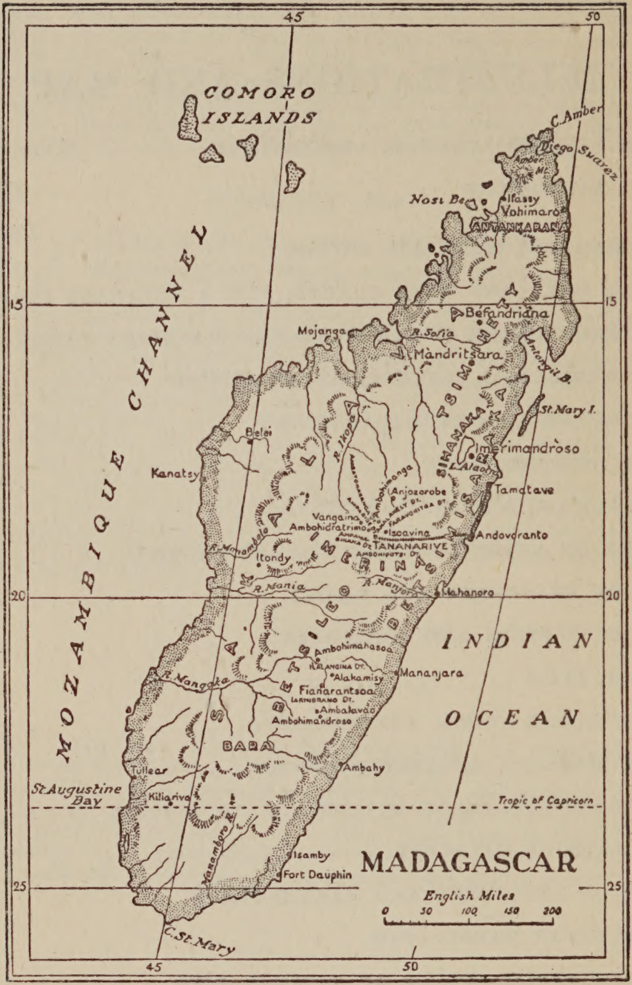
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C. Amber
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R. Sofia
Mandritsara
Antongil B.
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Mojanga
TSIMIHETY
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Fifty Years in Madagascar:

Personal Experiences of Mission Life and Work

CHAPTER I

MOSTLY AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

This book is intended, primarily, to describe in as clear a manner as may be, various aspects of Church and Christian life among the Malagasy people. But as I propose, with that main object in view, to interweave something of personal experience during a connection of more than half a century with Madagascar, I trust it will not be thought too egotistic to preface what I have to say on both these points by a brief description of my own origin, as well as to describe how I came to go out at first to the great African island.

I come from an old ministerial and Puritan stock, for both my grandfathers, my father and two of his brothers, and my father-in-law were all Congregational ministers, and my eldest son, a son-in-law, and a brother-in-law, not to mention some eight or nine other near relatives and connections, have been or still are ministers of different churches and denominations. My paternal grandfather, the Rev. John Sibree, of Frome, in Somerset, was one of those ministers who took part in the service at Spafields Countess of Huntingdon Chapel on September 22, 1795, when the London Missionary Society was founded.[1] He was a warm friend of the eccentric and excellent Rev. Rowland Hill, supplying for him during one of the summer months for several years in succession at Surrey Chapel, London. He had a family of thirteen children, and among them three sons—Peter, James, and John—became ministers at Birmingham, Hull, and Coventry respectively, John, however, being the eldest, and my father, James, the youngest of that apostolic trio.

---

[1] He offered prayer and gave out the hymn, "O'er those gloomy hills of darkness," etc.

My maternal grandfather, the Rev. David Watson Aston, was for forty years minister of the New Meeting in Buckingham; and his brother, the Rev. Thomas Aston, was for thirty-three years minister at Wingrave, in the same county of Bucks. My father-in-law, the Rev. Joseph Wilberforce Richardson, was for many years co-pastor with the well-known Rev. Dr. John Campbell, of the old "Tabernacles" in Moorfields and Tottenham Court Road. And if I add to the foregoing particulars that my dear and honoured father, the Rev. James Sibree, was for sixty years minister at Hull; that my eldest son, James Wilberforce Sibree, was for twenty-three years a missionary of the L.M.S. in Samoa, and that my late son-in-law, Percy Milledge, was for six years a missionary in Madagascar, in which great island two daughters are also missionaries, while a third daughter does medical mission work in China—I have said enough to show that we as a family are closely connected with the ministerial office, and may be said to belong to the tribe of Levi! [1] Most of these relatives were—or are—ministers of the Congregational Church, but some with the Wesleyan, the United Methodist, the Presbyterian, and the Episcopal Churches; a cousin of my mother's, one of whose names was Goode, the Very Rev. Wm. Goode, D.D., was a Dean of Ripon (1860–1868) and a shining light of the Evangelical party in the early Victorian period.

Our family name, it will be evident, is not an English one, but is believed to be of Spanish origin.[2] According to the tradition preserved by my father's ancestors, they came from Spain, where they possessed considerable property, about three centuries ago. But, embracing Protestant opinions, they had to leave their native country to avoid persecution from the Inquisition, and eventually took refuge, like thousands of French Huguenots, in England, where they found "freedom to worship God" according to their conscience. It seems also most probable that for several generations there must have been only one surviving son to carry on the succession; and the *London Directory* gives no one bearing the name save that of a second cousin, now Vicar of Wandsworth (Rev. F. J. Sibree, M.A.). A few years ago, when a squadron of American cruisers touched at Samoa, the captain of one of the vessels bore the name of "Sebree," and it seems probable that he was some distant connection of ours, with the name slightly altered in spelling. My father's mother's name was Payne, and the genealogy on her side goes back to the sixteenth century, the head of each generation having a large family, so that we have many connections of that name.

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[1] A niece, Dorothy Sibree, is a missionary in India; other family connections were missionaries in Jamaica and in New Zealand; while another, the Rev. Thos. Atkinson, was for a year a missionary in Madagascar (1831–1832); but as he was not allowed to remain longer in the island, he went to South Africa, labouring there for fifty years.

[2] It was probably pronounced Sibré; and my French friends in Madagascar generally wrote it with an accent on the final é.

As regards my first going to Madagascar, I think that the circumstances which led to it are not without some interest, as showing how often seemingly small matters lead to important results, and influence and alter our lives.

I must premise that in 1863 I was in the office of the Local Board of Health at Hull, my native town, as assistant surveyor, and that from my boyhood I had always been interested in architecture, although I had been articled pupil to a civil engineer, Mr. James Oldham, Mem.Inst.C.E., of Hull. This gentleman was an old friend of my father's (the Rev. James Sibree, already mentioned), and for many years Mr. Oldham and my father had been co-secretaries of the local auxiliary of the London Missionary Society in that town. That year (1863) happened to be the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the auxiliary, and the Hull friends were anxious to make the June meetings specially interesting and a means of awakening fresh interest in missions. The Rev. W. Fairbrother, Deputation Secretary of the London Society, accordingly came to Hull to take part in the gatherings, which were very stimulating and well attended. It also happened that Mr. Oldham had been summoned to London to give evidence before a Parliamentary Committee, with reference to some Bill—docks or railways, I believe—and, much to his disappointment, had to attend the Committee on the very week of the special meetings of the Hull auxiliary, and was in London for the purpose on the Sunday. On Monday morning he went to the House, but found that for some reason or other the Committee had been postponed for a few days. He immediately thought, "If I lose no time, I can catch a train and be in Hull in time for this evening's meeting, the chief one of the week."

He sped as quickly as possible to King's Cross, and reached Hull late in the afternoon, going immediately to the house of the treasurer of the auxiliary, where the committee and the ministers and the deputation were having tea. After a few minutes Mr. Oldham heard Mr. Fairbrother saying, "We are trying to find some young architect to go out to Madagascar and design and superintend the Memorial Churches. We hoped young Slater would consent, but he is determined to go to India, and we feel in a difficulty about it." Mr. Oldham immediately said, "I know some one who would be the man for you—our secretary's son, my old pupil, James Sibree." Mr. Fairbrother replied, "Indeed; what does he know about building?" Mr. Oldham gave him some further information about me, and Mr. Fairbrother said, "Well, I will tell Dr. Tidman (the foreign secretary) what you say when I go back to London."

In the evening, after the meeting, my father said to me, "Jim, how would you like to go to Madasgascar?" I was rather startled, but replied, "I think I should like to go there." My father said, "If you really think you would like to go, I believe there is a possibility of your doing so," and then he told me of the conversation at the meeting. A few days afterwards I received a letter from the Mission House, asking me to go up to London to meet the secretaries, and it was with a strange feeling of excitement that I went to Blomfield Street, and saw the officials, Dr. Tidman and the Rev. E. Prout. After a little conversation, in which they asked me what I had been doing, and looked at some of my drawings, and inquired whether I did not wish also to do some *spiritual* building, they told me to retire for a few minutes.

In a very short time I was recalled, and Dr. Tidman said, "The Directors have left the choosing of the architect for the Memorial Churches in our hands; so, if you decide to go, you may consider yourself appointed to Madagascar." I felt God's hand was leading me in this, and accepted the call. I need not detail here how, in several particulars the way was made easy for me to go.

My parents felt it an honour and a privilege to give their eldest son to missionary work. And for myself, I may say that I never had a doubt that God had called me to Madagascar. Within two months of my meeting with the secretaries, I was on my way out there.

I believe my call to the more distinct and definite missionary work was as clear as the first appointment as missionary architect. I had urgent entreaties from the congregations whom I had instructed there, by preaching and Bible-class work, to return and be their missionary. I was strongly urged by my brother missionaries to return to Madagascar; and on reaching England I was invited by the Directors of the London Missionary Society to become one of their permanent staff in that country. I therefore felt that a Divine call to preach the Gospel in Madagascar had come to me; and so I resolved, in God's strength, to devote my life to missionary work.

CHAPTER II

CHURCH BUILDING AMID DIFFICULTIES

More than two generations have now passed away since I went first to Madagascar, and it may perhaps be thought that I am writing "ancient history" in speaking of my early experiences in the great island. Yet the information may be of interest to the present generation, whose fathers and mothers—and possibly grandparents also—gave money for carrying out the work which I went to do.

What, then, are the "Memorial Churches," of which mention has already been made? Of whom were they to be memorials? And why did English money pay for them, and an English architect go out to build them?

At the time of which I now speak (1863), Madagascar was a country of intense interest to the Christian people of England. The early mission of the London Missionary Society commenced there in 1820 had had remarkable success; and then, the bitter persecution carried on from 1835 to 1861 had revealed a courage and a power of endurance in the Malagasy converts which excited deep sympathy and long-continued prayer, that the dark cloud might pass away and that liberty of worship might again be given. But darkness covered the land for more than a quarter of a century and was only dispersed by the death of the heathen Queen Rànavàlona in August 1861, when the country was again opened to Europeans and to Christian effort.

During the time of the persecution, the Rev. Wm. Ellis had edited a *History of Madagascar*, from information supplied by the first missionaries to the island. And he had also visited Madagascar three times, being allowed, on the third occasion, to go up to the Capital and remain there for one month. The book he wrote after his return home, *Three Visits to Madagascar*, did very much to deepen the interest of English Christians in the Malagasy people. As soon, therefore, as news came of the great change in the political situation, Mr. Ellis immediately offered his services to the Directors of the L.M.S. to go out and re-establish their mission in Antanànarìvo; and before long he was on his way to Madagascar, which he reached in June 1862, after staying during the unhealthy season at Mauritius.

During Mr. Ellis's short stay in the Capital in 1856, he had observed in his rides through and round the city that some of the sites where the Malagasy martyrs had suffered were very prominent and suitable places where Christian churches might be erected. So while waiting in Mauritius during the early part of 1862 he wrote to King Radàma II, asking him to secure four or five of these sites from being built upon, and that he would like to occupy them for religious purposes. The king readily agreed to this request; and then the idea occurred to Mr. Ellis to write home to Christian people in England and ask for enough money to erect four substantial stone churches on the very spots where the martyrs suffered. The native Christians were much impoverished by fines and imprisonment and loss of rank and honour during the long period of persecution, so the proposed buildings would therefore provide several congregations with good places of worship; and they would, at the same time, be lasting memorials of those who had bravely given up their lives for the Gospel.

This proposal was taken up with wonderful enthusiasm and liberality in England and in other countries as well; money soon flowed in for the purpose, far more indeed than Mr. Ellis had dared to hope for; so that in a very few weeks above £14,000 had been contributed. The Directors then thought that the buildings must have more of a monumental and architectural character than Mr. Ellis had contemplated, and in consequence they began to look for some one who would go out to Madagascar for three or four years and design and superintend the erection of four "Martyr Memorial Churches." The little chain of events which led to their engaging me to undertake this responsible and not altogether easy task, I have already described. And I may here remark that although I then knew very little about it, Madagascar had always a peculiar charm and fascination for me. This continued for many years; indeed I am not free from it yet!

This is not the place to speak of the incidents of my voyage out to Mauritius by the "Overland Route" (for the Suez Canal was not then made); or of the "roughing it" in a passage to Tamatave in one of the delectable vessels called "bullockers"; or of the novel and intensely interesting experiences of a journey of eight or nine days by palanquin up to Antanànarìvo, first, for sixty miles between the coast-lakes and the sea, and then through two belts of dense forest to the interior highland. These are given in my book, *A Naturalist in Madagascar*.

I had not arrived in the Capital many days before I accompanied Mr. Ellis in a ride round the city to inspect the sites on which I had to erect the Memorial Churches. I was much impressed by their fine situation and their suitability for their intended purpose; and it was soon decided that we should commence the first church at a spot called Am-bàton-akànga.[1] This was a good-sized piece of ground at the junction of the two chief roads through the city, in a very commanding position, and in the midst of a large population.

This Ambàtonakànga was an historic place in the history of the Madagascar Mission, for it was here that the first printing-press was set up (in 1825) and the first sheets printed. Then a school-house and a small chapel were erected here; and after a destructive fire, printing was again carried on in the same place, and it was here, therefore, that first the New Testament (in 1830), and afterwards the complete Bible (in 1835), were printed in the Malagasy language. But the simple little sanctuary erected at Ambàtonakànga was only used for religious worship for four years (1831–1835), for in March of the latter year repressive measures against Christianity began, and the house of God became a prison-house, in which many native Christians were confined in heavy chains before being taken to a cruel death in various parts of the city. The walls of the chapel, only eight or nine feet high, were still standing; and, although all its former fittings had long ago disappeared, it had been roofed over and was then occupied by one of the largest congregations in the Capital.

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[1] That is, "at the Stone of the Guinea-fowl." I divide and accent the syllables for easy pronunciation.

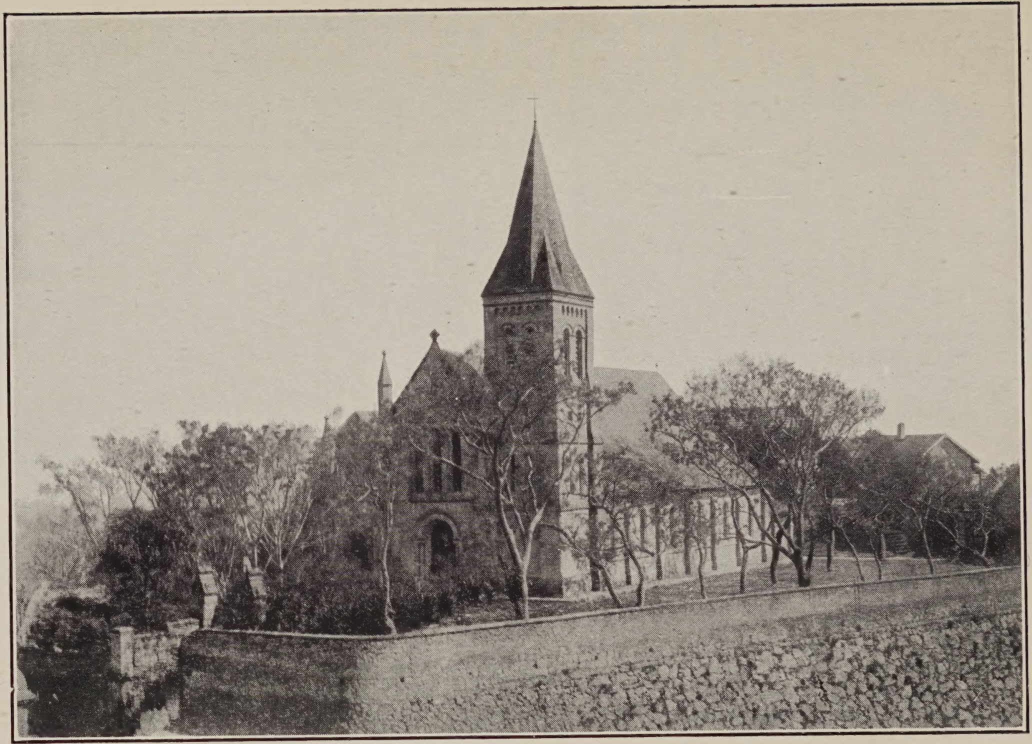
It was no easy task to make an accurate preliminary plan of the ground, for it was covered over with stone, some of it in shapeless masses from blasting the rock on the site, as well as with scores of blocks which has been already roughly squared and dressed by the masons. At the far end of the ground several immense boulders of granite still remained to be broken up before the whole of the foundations could be put in; and we wanted it all to build a great retaining wall on the east side, where the road sloped rapidly downwards, so that it became quite forty feet below the level of the church ground.

But my difficulties soon began, for help that I had been confidently promised in England before leaving was explicitly refused me, through jealousy of my position as architect, and so I had to do without the assistance I ought to have had. It is difficult for us now to understand that Madagascar was then an uncivilized country, with no organized labour, with no one at all like a European builder or contractor, and with very few skilled workmen, either carpenters or masons; so it may be imagined that the task of erecting even one large church to accommodate about a thousand people was no easy one. Then I was in a new country, quite unacquainted with the ways of the people, or of the available materials, and totally ignorant of the language, which contained hardly any technical words connected with building; and yet I was expected by the Directors of the L.M.S. to erect four churches in four or five years! To add to my difficulties, the friend who should have helped me began to build a palace for the Queen, and a large house for the Prime Minister; and as each of these was Government service, every skilled workman had to give his time and unpaid labour, so that it was only by stealth, as it were, and by, I suspect, a good deal of petty bribery by them of their immediate superiors, that I could get any labour at all. Of course I had this advantage, that we paid good and fair wages for our work, but still the hindrances were many and great.

Mr. Ellis willingly helped me as far as he could by translating for me, but his knowledge of Malagasy was very limited; and although he had a fairly large vocabulary I soon discovered that his pronunciation was very curious, and that he knew very little of the grammar of the language (small blame to him, for he came out when he was advancing in age, being sixty-seven years old in 1862). He had already made some contracts for quarrying and dressing stone and for building it into the walling, and he had bought the wood of a large unfinished timber-framed house from one of the nobles; and as this was now dry and well seasoned, it could be put in hand at once for the roofing and other woodwork of the church. A young Scotch carpenter from the Cape, Mr. R. Aitkin, had been engaged to assist me in the work with his practical knowledge, and had arrived in Madagascar a few days before I got there, and he was a willing and efficient helper, so we began to put up a carpenter's shop on the ground, and several lads were obtained as apprentices.

After inspecting whatever stonework was to be seen in Antanànarìvo, which consisted of a few gateways and a good many native tombs, especially the immense one belonging to the Prime Minister's family—a rather remarkable piece of work—I soon decided that the local stone, found in many places in and around the city, which is itself a mass of gneiss rock, would do admirably for our churches, and I therefore designed a church in a round-arched style, resembling Norman, which I judged would admit of comparatively rough workmanship; and I soon saw that anything in a classic style, with low-pitched roofs, would be quite unsuitable in a country with heavy rains in the wet season, and that we must have roofs with a somewhat steep pitch to throw off quickly the torrents of water. This first church was planned to accommodate about a thousand people, and was to have nave and aisles, a shallow apse, and tower and spire at one angle of the main front, and to be entirely of stone inside and out.

After clearing the ground somewhat, and digging out part of the foundations, we prepared to lay the foundation stone, and this was done on January 19, 1864, by the Prime Minister, accompanied by a few of the chief officers of Government; and so we began the work. However, before



MEMORIAL CHURCH, AMBÀTONAKÀNGA, ANTANÀNARIVO

many weeks had elapsed, my good helper, Mr. Aitkin, was attacked by malarial fever, and was so ill that our doctor decided he must leave Madagascar and retire to Mauritius, and so I lost his valuable services. I soon found that I must be on the ground almost all day long to superintend my workmen, or things would go wrong. The mysteries of the spirit-level and the plumb-bob to keep the courses of stone truly level and exactly upright were quite unknown to them; I had to teach them how to square the stones accurately, and to use the instruments provided, or I should find, after two or three courses were laid, that the uppermost one projected an inch or two over the lower ones. I found myself, therefore, not only architect, but builder and contractor, clerk of works and foreman, all in one; for I had to measure every stone, and to mark every piece of stone myself, except the plain walling, from the foundation course to the summit of the spire. Drawings and scales of feet and inches were then quite useless to Malagasy workmen.

I should not have troubled myself about all that, however, if I could have obtained materials and workmen to go on steadily with the building. But the interruptions were numerous and continual. The Malagasy were not then at all accustomed to working regularly at one task for weeks and months together. Everybody had his own rice-fields to see after; and at times of planting the rice —their staff of life—or transplanting it, or digging the ground, or clearing the water-courses, or weeding, or harvest —all that must be done, and other work be left for a time. Then Government requirements fetched the men away very frequently. Then native habits and family affairs constantly came to interrupt us, such as births, circumcision festivals, marriages, and, especially, funerals. I would go down day after day and find ugly gaps left in the walling. "Where is Ravèlo, or Ranàivo, or Rafàralàhy, or Ra-somebody else?" I ask. "Oh, he has gone to bury his grandmother," his fellows reply. Well, of course, deceased grandmothers must be buried, like all other people. But after a month or so the same interruption occurs, and again I ask about the missing mason, and again the same reply is given, that his grandmother has to be buried. "What? another grandmother dead so soon?" I inquire. And

I soon find that "grandmother" is a conveniently wide term for any elderly female relative or family connection, to the twentieth cousin; and I also discovered that funerals mean the killing of oxen after the obsequies, and that all who "assist" on those occasions expect to return home carrying with them a good lump of beef!

Then the supply of building stone on the site began to fail and had to be brought from some distance. Lime was a Government monopoly and was difficult to obtain in sufficient quantity, and it was often found to be adulterated with white earth. All these hindrances, it may be easily understood, made our work advance very slowly; now and then it was stopped altogether for some time from one cause or another, on one occasion for two months, and it will not be thought strange if at times I almost despaired of ever getting this first church completed. To add to my worries, the good folks at home began to get impatient at the long delay, and I had letters again and again from the Mission House begging me to tell them that this, that, and the other had been finished; for they seemed unable to understand how utterly different a thing building a great stone church in Madagascar was to doing the same kind of work in England.

Still, we got on somehow; and as the building began to show up, in its prominent position, it caused great astonishment to the Malagasy. Especially on the market-days, when thousands of people passed by the site, the church was an object of gaping wonder to the crowds from the villages and from distant places. Very various and amusing were the conjectures as to the purpose to which the tower was to be applied. Some were confident that the belfry windows (when half-finished) were embrasures for cannon, and that we English were cunning fellows, who were preparing a strong place of security against any time of disturbance; and others, again, in utter disbelief that it would ever be completed, said, "When that is finished, I will pray," i.e. become a Christian.

I dared not tell my workmen how high I was really going; I should have frightened them too much, although the tower was only the modest height of 50 feet, and the spire about 30 feet more. As it was, it was not without some difficulty that I induced them to proceed; and had I not had the same men from the beginning, and so gradually accustomed them to the increasing height, they would never have ventured up to the awful elevation of 70 or 80 feet. More than once their wives and children came begging that I would give their husbands and fathers some other work and not send them up to the skies in the way I was doing. I calmed their fears, partly by a little coaxing, and partly by pointing out how much more their relatives were earning through their boldness, and assuring them that I would take every precaution for their safety. At one time I almost thought I should have to complete the spire myself, with the help of my good foreman and two or three labourers who had assisted to erect the scaffolding, and had at length become very fearless.

Yet, slow as our progress was, we at last—after thirty months' work—approached the highest point of the structure; and it was with a feeling of deep thankfulness that, on the 31st of August, 1866, I ascended the scaffolding, together with the Rev. George Cousins, the missionary-in-charge, and then laid the capstone of the spire, and fixed the finial cross and lightning conductor in their place. Our good native foreman then said, " Shall we not thank God ? " Mr. Cousins accordingly, in a few words, expressed our gratitude that we had been permitted to see our undertaking brought so far to completion, and our deep thankfulness that no accident had befallen any of the workmen; so that if the topstone was not exactly " brought forth with shouting," it was at least laid with heartfelt thanksgiving. It was market-day, and numbers of people were passing below and wondering what we were doing up at that lofty position. I shall never forget that little group at the top of the spire, and our united prayer and praise.

After five months more of labour, during which the woodwork was completed, pulpit and platform, gallery and seating, and the glass fixed into the window openings, the building was finished, and on the 22nd of January, 1867, was publicly dedicated to the worship of God by a day of hearty and joyous services. And what a change it was from the low, dark, and gloomy little chapel to the spacious, lofty, and well-lighted new church!

Considering the difficulties I had to contend with, and especially the experimental character of this first stone church in such a country, I was not disappointed in its general effect, either within or without, although there were some details I would have arranged differently had I had more experience. The funds at my disposal kept me to very modest proportions as regards height, for both the main building and the tower would have been improved by a little greater elevation. Still, the church formed a prominent addition to the city, and its clock in the tower was the first public timekeeper seen in Madagascar. The accompanying illustration will, however, give a clearer notion of its appearance than any verbal description. The interior has arcades of circular columns supporting round arches, and a lofty arch spans the opening into the shallow semi-hexagonal apse, with its stained-glass windows.

But a few words must be added about the opening day. It was an occasion of great rejoicing on the part of the native Christians; and numbers of non-Christians also pressed into the church, which was densely crowded long before the hour, nine o'clock, for commencing the service; for probably fifteen or sixteen hundred people were packed together in the main building and its vestries and vestibule, and round the doors. We had, besides hymns and prayers and Scripture lessons, no fewer than *four* sermons that morning! Think of that, ye church- and chapel-goers, who sometimes get restive and tired under *one* discourse! And as soon as the morning congregation turned *out*, the afternoon congregation turned *in!* for they had been waiting outside most of the morning; and there they patiently remained from twelve o'clock to three, for their service, at which *three* sermons were delivered. The Queen sent a party of officers of rank to represent her on the occasion, and they were accompanied by a band of music.

But what, it may probably be asked, about the other Memorial Churches? In the middle of the year 1865, the Directors recognizing the difficulties of my position, sent me out another helper, Mr. William Pool, who worked with me most harmoniously. As soon as possible after his arrival in the Capital we commenced the second church at the extreme southern end of the city hill, at a spot called

Am-bòhi-pòtsy.[1] It was here that the first Malagasy martyr, a brave Christian lady named Rasalàma, was killed by spearing in August 1837; and in subsequent years many others were also put to death here in the same way. As I had now got experience of the capabilities of the native workmen, and also as to what effects I could obtain in the local stone, this second church was designed more ornately in the Early English style of Gothic, and was planned to consist of nave and aisles, transepts and apse, and tower and spire a few feet higher than I gave at Ambàtonakànga. Mr. Pool took my drawings and carried out my designs in a very excellent fashion; and now, after fifty years, and with many good buildings erected in the Capital by the Government architects and workmen, the stonework in the Ambòhipòtsy church has not been excelled in any of them. Before I left Madagascar in May 1867 this second church had been finished nearly to the top of the tower. After completing a full set of drawings for the third church, that to be built at Fàravòhitra, where four Malagasy Christians were burnt to death in 1849, and also making preliminary sketches for the fourth church at Ampàmarìnana, the " Rock of Hurling," as well as designing other churches and mission buildings, and my term of four years' service having expired, I returned to England, where I arrived on August 24th.

I may add here that it was a pleasure to me, as well as a duty, to do some mission work, as soon as my knowledge of the language enabled me to do so. After a few weeks I began a kind of Sunday School, or rather a large Sunday class, at Ambàtonakànga, where I was a member; and after a twelvemonth I began preaching and conducting Bible classes both in the Capital and in our country district; so that up to the time I left Madagascar in 1867 I was seldom without some Sunday engagement.

One more concluding remark may be made about the Memorial Church scheme: We thus gave the Malagasy Christians four substantial and durable houses of prayer, which will testify in all time to come to the steadfastness and courage of those to whose fidelity to conscience and to truth their country owes, under God, its greatest blessing, a scriptural faith. And we have shown in a very striking and tangible manner the sympathy of the British churches with their persecuted brethren, and our belief that "the righteous should be had in everlasting remembrance."

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[1] That is, " At the White village " (or hill), from the white rock and soil of which it is composed. It is pronounced Am-boo-hi-pootsy, the Malagasy *o* being like our *o* in *do, to* and *move.*

Great buildings have always been a power, and have given a certain fixed and enduring character to all systems with which they have been connected. And while our faith is not in buildings, but in principles, yet even minor aids like these are not to be despised. Probably nothing else would have given the non-Christian Malagasy such a real, visible and convincing proof of the deep interest taken by English Christians in the establishment of the Gospel in their island. These stone buildings are a witness that we believe in our religion, that we desire earnestly to extend its blessings to them, and that, as far as we have any influence, Christianity shall be an enduring and settled *fact* in Madagascar; not a temporary thing, fitly symbolized by a frail structure of rush or clay, but lasting as the solid granite of which these churches are built.

I may therefore be excused if I feel that it was a great honour and privilege to have taken a rather prominent part in carrying out the scheme of erecting the Martyr Memorial Churches of Madagascar.

CHAPTER III

MALAGASY IDOLATRY AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF

BEFORE speaking of individual Christian life and of collective church life in Madagascar, in their brighter, and also in their less attractive aspects, it will be well to show what it was from which the Malagasy of the central provinces—many of them, at least—have been delivered by the influence and diffusion of Christianity amongst them. What *was* their religious condition before the first missionaries began their work in Imèrina in the third decade of the past century? What did they believe as to a Deity, or their own duty, or a life beyond the present one?

These questions may be answered first by a series of negatives. Their religion had no organized character: no temples, with carved and painted images of gods and goddesses; no priesthood properly so called; it recognized no caste-divisions, and it had no regular places or times for worship or sacrifices. In all these respects it was markedly different from Hinduism and the religious systems of many Asiatic peoples. And although the ancestors of the Malagasy, especially those of their chiefs and sovereigns, were held in honour, their worship was not a conspicuous and necessary part of their religious observances, as it is among the Chinese. And further, the religious beliefs of the people of Madagascar did not include the barbarous and cruel customs of many African tribes, with wholesale destruction of human life, as was also the case amongst many islanders of Polynesia.

So far, then, as regards the negative aspects of Malagasy religious belief and customs; and now as with respect to its positive side, it may be said first that, as far as native tradition can be a guide, the idolatry of Madagascar is, comparatively, of very recent origin. The primitive religion of the people appears to have been a somewhat pure Theism; a belief in one Supreme Creating Spirit, who made the heavens and the earth and mankind. He was known chiefly under two appellations, viz., *Andrianànahàry*, or in its shorter form, *Zànahàry*, i.e. " The Creating Prince," or " The Creator"; and also, *Andriamànitra*, i.e. " The Fragrant Prince," probably from the use of incense, the burning of fragrant gums, in idol worship.

And although before the advent of the Arabs and Europeans the Malagasy had no written language, their ideas as to God and morals are very clearly seen in the numerous proverbs, which have been handed down from a remote past, and which were and are constantly quoted in all public speeches at national, or tribal, or family gatherings, in sermons and religious addresses, and also in everyday conversation amongst all classes. Three or four thousands of these proverbs have been collected and printed, and a large proportion of them have been carefully arranged, according to their subjects and translated into English and French, for the use especially of those studying the Malagasy language; and they throw a most interesting light upon the primitive native ideas as to God and His attributes, and as to right and wrong, selfishness and kindness, truthfulness and duplicity, wisdom and folly, and native habits and superstitions, etc. And although many of them simply display the weaknesses and the mistakes of human nature, numbers of them, on the contrary, bear remarkable testimony to the truths taught in our own sacred Scriptures, and show that among those heathen Malagasy, while still largely cut off from any intercourse with Europeans, there shone, not dimly in some cases, that light, the light of conscience, " which lighteth every man coming into the world."

God did not leave Himself entirely without witness in Madagascar before the Gospel was brought to the island; and many Malagasy seem to have received some leading from the Divine Spirit, " Who is not far from any one of us." There were doubtless some who " feared God and worked righteousness," according to the light they had, although it was but dim. In proof of what has just been stated, it may be interesting to quote a few of these Malagasy proverbs :—

God's dwelling-place was believed to be in heaven, for one proverb says : " Like a chicken drinking water, it lifts up its head to God." God's omniscience was acknowledged in the saying : " God looks from on high and sees what is concealed," and also : " Do not think (of doing evil) in the secret valley, for God is overhead," and further : " There is nothing unknown to God, although He purposely stoops down (to overlook it)," a parallel sentiment to what St. Paul said to the Athenians : " The times of this ignorance God winked at " (Acts xvii. 30). God is acknowledged as the Author of life, in the ordinary congratulation to parents on the birth of a child : " Salutation ! God has given you an heir." Another proverb speaks of God's power to control man's self-will, in the words : " The waywardness of man is controlled by the Creator, for God alone overrules." That God's gifts are sometimes delayed and should be patiently waited for, was also acknowledged in the saying : " I will wait for God, although some will not wait His time." God's righteousness was recognized in the words : " God hates evil," and also in this saying : " God is not to be blamed : the Creator is not to be censured : it is men who wander from the right path." A judgment to come seems to be acknowledged in the proverb : " Better be guilty with men than guilty with God." The common form of thanks : " May you be blessed of God," recognizes Him as the Author of good ; and a successful man was termed *Bénânahàry*, i.e. " having much of God."

Such sayings as these show unmistakably that although the Malagasy were debased by idolatry and superstition and much ignorance, there have always been among them lingering traditions of a purer faith, although these may not have had much influence upon their lives and conduct. Yet to such sayings as these the Christian missionary can appeal, as St. Paul did to the Stoics and Epicureans at Athens, when he quoted Aratus and Kleanthes as teaching the same truth which he wanted to enforce, and declared : " As some also of your own poets have said," thus and thus. At the opening of the Ambàtonakànga Memorial Church in January 1867 the Rev. W. E. Cousins took for his text Acts xviii. 23, which he paraphrased slightly by translating it thus: "The God whom your fathers worshipped, although they knew Him not, declare we unto you." In his introduction he quoted with great effect many of the ancient sayings given above, proving to the Malagasy there present, numbers of them still heathen, that their ancestors had some knowledge of the true God, although they had largely forgotten Him.

But subsequent to this knowledge, of which the proverbs and popular sayings just given are evidences and relics, there grew up in Madagascar a kind of idolatry which was, however, really fetishism, a belief in charms. Thus they had charms against crocodiles, which abound in all the rivers and lakes; charms against witchcraft; charms to protect from the gunshot of an enemy; charms against hail, which frequently destroys the just-ripening rice crops; and charms against small-pox, fever, and other disease. And there is no doubt that these are still believed in by numbers of the Malagasy. The witch and the wizard are greatly feared as having wonderful powers of doing evil. These gentry used to place small baskets of charred wood, stones and other rubbish at the doors of persons whom they wished to injure; and the fear which these inspired often brought about the evil which the dealer in the black art desired to effect. Some time before the revolution in 1863, which resulted in the death of King Radàma II, several baskets of this kind were placed against the door of Mr. Ellis's house in the hope that he would be killed or injured by some occult evil influence. The charms just mentioned were the most worthless and stupid objects that can be imagined; bits of stick, stones, charred wood, a little bag of sand, a crocodile's tooth, a piece of bullock's horn, and especially certain kinds of beads, the different shapes and markings being supposed to have various powers of bringing good, or averting calamity.

The evil eye was greatly dreaded by the Malagasy, as indeed it still is in many countries in Europe and other parts of the world, not even excepting our own country; so that we need not be surprised at the Malagasy not being free from fears of this kind.

A very widely extended belief was in that of the *Tangèna* poison ordeal. The nut of a certain tree, one with beautiful foliage (*Tanghinia venenifera*), growing in the woods of the east coast region, was used for the purpose. This was scraped and mixed with the juice of a banana and administered to the person accused or suspected of crime, together with a long invocation and fearful maledictions. It was believed that a certain spirit, with power to judge and detect a criminal, lived in, or was connected with, this *Tangèna* nut, and entered into the stomach of the accused person, searching out his guilt, or innocence, and infallibly condemning or acquitting him. So implicit was this popular belief that perfectly innocent persons, if they thought they were suspected of doing wrong, would demand to have it administered to them, feeling sure of acquittal by the unseen but all-powerful spirit, but often perishing miserably, and so being considered by others as both deceitful and wicked. The supposed mark of innocency was the rejection by vomiting, uninjured, three small pieces of the skin of a fowl previously swallowed together with the poison.

Of course there was much trickery in the administration of the *Tangèna,* and the Government often employed it to get rid of those whom they considered obnoxious persons. Many Christian Malagasy were obliged to take the ordeal; some of them dying from its effects, or being subsequently killed, as having been judged guilty; while some, on the contrary, escaped any harm and were considered innocent, for the time, at least. I have conversed with native friends who were subjected to the *Tangèna*; it was extremely bitter, and produced vomiting and much pain; and a large dose (about thirty grains) would kill by poisoning unless promptly rejected. It was believed that during part of the reign of the persecuting Queen Rànavàlona I, at least a tenth of the people of the central provinces died annually from its administration. Its employment was finally abolished by the Malagasy Government in the year 1863.

At some period, probably about the middle of the eighteenth century, it is supposed that certain of the charms or *òdy* (as they are termed) venerated by the Malagasy, especially those of the reigning family, obtained special veneration and honour and gradually became practically national idols. These were referred to in royal proclamations as protectors of the sovereign and of the kingdom;

and afterwards, when the influence of the Gospel began to be felt, the Christian natives were reviled and considered disloyal because they would not reverence or invoke them.

These chief idols of Imèrina were called respectively :—(1) *Rakèlimalàza*, i.e. "Little (yet) famous" ; (2) *Ramàhavàly*, i.e. "One able to answer" (or, "to avenge"); (3) *Rafantàka*, i.e. "The clever one"; (4) *Imanjàkatsiròà*, i.e. "There are not two sovereigns."

Of these four, the first-named was apparently considered the chief. And it will probably be asked : What were these idols like ? Rakèlimalàza is said to have been two small pieces of bamboo, fastened together with fine and small silver chains, and with coverings, when carried in public, of dark-blue cloth and scarlet silk. Ramàhavàly was, according to the description of it given to me by an intelligent native friend, two small pieces of wood shaped like a lizard, and fastened together on a pole. This idol, as its name implied, was considered as an oracle, and was kept in a cave, on a mountain-side (Andrìngitra), about sixteen or seventeen miles north-west of the Capital. To it people resorted to ask whether they would be prosperous on taking a journey, or in trading, or in marrying a wife, or in any other important matter.

Of course the answer to these questions was given by one of the idol-keepers concealed in the dark recesses of the cave ; and one of his companions had met beforehand with the inquirers, so as to know about them, and what they desired, and to frame the oracular responses accordingly. King Radàma I, who was a shrewd man and not easily deceived, once paid a visit to Ramàhavàly's cave, to put certain questions to the idol ; and when the answer came, he was convinced that it was the voice of a man, and not of a god ; so he advanced into the darkness, laid hold of the idol-keeper and dragged him out into the light of day, and thus showed to those waiting outside how they had been deceived. But superstitions of this kind die hard ; and after Radàma's death the belief in the oracle revived ; and even now is not entirely passed away.

Three of these idols, as well as some others, were kept in an ordinary native wooden house in different villages around Antanànarìvo. Idol-keepers had charge of them, and in the houses were numerous baskets filled with leaves and pieces of wood, which were sold as charms and were supposed to have special sanctity and influence from their connection with the idol. When they were carried abroad a scarlet umbrella protected them from the sun, just as the sovereign had that mark of distinction; and the man who carried the idol wore a scarlet *làmba*, as the sovereign was also garbed on all public and state occasions.

Each idol had its *fàdy* or things tabooed, such as pork, shell-fish, onions, etc.; and each had also its special day of the week, on which it was more than usually invoked and supposed to have particular power. They were frequently anointed with castor-oil or honey; and the cloth and silk coverings had consequently to be often renewed, the sovereign usually giving these in the shape of pieces of various material. They were all held in great reverence and fear by the non-Christian Malagasy up to fifty years ago. Ramàhavàly was also supposed to be the patron and lord of serpents; and when, in 1829, the British Agent at the Capital, Mr. Lyall, had offended in some way Queen Rànavàlona I, the idol's keepers and attendants went and set free a large number of serpents in the courtyard of Mr. Lyall's house, as a sign that he was obnoxious to the idol. Although, happily, there are no poisonous snakes in Madagascar, it was sufficiently annoying to have numbers of these reptiles creeping and crawling about one's premises.

As regards the other two chief idols, Rafantàka was kept in the old capital, Ambòhimànga; while Imanjàkatsiròa, as its name implied, was the royal idol in a special manner, and was kept in a house in the royal courtyard at Antanànarìvo, so as to be always near the sovereign.

A somewhat elaborately-made idol is figured in Mr. Ellis's *History of Madagascar*, and from the illustration here given it will be seen that it consisted of a central piece of wood, apparently about a foot long, around which were firmly bound half a dozen objects in silver, in the shape of crocodiles' teeth, but hollow, and each with a cover or stopper. Above these were fastened other small articles, some like shells, and others like long pods or seeds, and also a number of links of silver chain. Mr. Ellis thus describes the appearance of some of the idols which were borne in procession at the coronation of Radàma II: " They were about thirteen in number, and were carried on slender poles about ten feet high. Some of them were pieces of silver chain; others silver balls, from the size of a marble to that of a hen's egg, pieces of coral or bone, and silver ornaments like crocodiles' teeth, together with narrow strips of scarlet cloth one to two feet long, some of them half concealed under what might have been a cap of liberty, and others tied up in a bag of cloth or a small rush basket. Such were the objects on which the security and prosperity of the nation were supposed to depend."

But their end came about seven years afterwards, and it was a good day for Madagascar when, in September 1869, Queen Rànavàlona II, the first Christian sovereign, together with her Government, determined to destroy these means of deception and fraud. The idol-keepers had become aggressive and even insolent in their demands, so the Queen and her chief advisers saw that the time had come for putting an end to their influence. Officers of high rank were sent out to the villages where the idols were kept, and on their arrival they assembled the people and demanded of them and of the idol-keepers: " To whom does this idol belong? to you or to the sovereign?" They dared not deny that the idol was the Queen's. " Then," replied the officers, " the Queen says, because the idol is mine, I will destroy it, because it has deceived my people; for I believe in the one true and living God and in His Son, Jesus Christ."

A native friend of mine, named Rainivèlo, pastor of one of the village churches in my mission district, was one of the royal messengers sent to burn the idol Ramàhavàly, already mentioned; and he gave me a minute account of what happened on the occasion, from which I translate the following passages.

After giving the names of the officers whom he accompanied, and the questions they put to the idol-keepers, he says: " The idol was kept in a wooden box placed in the north-east (the sacred) corner of the house, and when they were told to fetch it out, they all looked at each other, for they were afraid of the idol and would not fetch it. Then the officers said to me: 'Do you fetch it, Rainivèlo,' and then they whispered to me: 'Take good care lest you fall from the ladder.' So I went up and brought down the idol and all its belongings. There were two large wooden boxes, and fifteen large and eleven smaller baskets and nine honey-boxes, all as full as possible of leaves and pieces of wood used as charms, some of which were fastened together with silver chains and coral beads.

"One of the wooden boxes contained red *làmbas* and scarlet cloth; and in the other was the idol itself. This consisted of two pieces of wood fastened together, about six inches long and three inches thick; these had coverings of dark-blue cloth, then native silk cloth, and then scarlet cloth. They were anointed with castor-oil and a kind of gum used as incense. And I must confess, that although I had the idol in my hands, I still half thought it something having life; while the idol-keepers and their tribe were lost in amazement seeing me pull it to pieces. Then they said, all speaking confidently: 'If Rainivèlo does not die suddenly, then there surely is what they call Jehovah, to Whom he prays'; for, while still holding it up, I spoke upon the nothingness of idols, and of the power of God and the mercy of Jesus Christ.

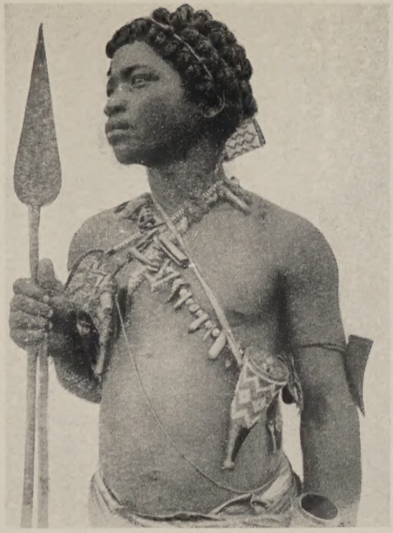
"And as I was about to burn it, R. said to me: 'Take good care of your fire, for if it goes out, they will say, "Ramàhavàly has put out the fire"'; so I put on some fat and firewood first, and when it was well kindled I put on all the smaller articles and the leaves, and soon there was a fine blaze for the idol itself, for I took care that everything should be destroyed, so glad was I in burning them all.

"After Ramàhavàly's burning, I visited twenty-one congregations in succession, preaching each Sunday about the destruction of the idols, especially this one, and about the power of Jesus Christ, taking principally as my text the words: 'Be not faithless, but believing.'" These twenty-one congregations were in villages in the neighbourhood of the one where the idol had been kept, and where the people had great faith in its influence. As the Malagasy now said, "*Làsan-ko sètroka ny sàmpy*," i.e. "The idols had gone into smoke"; and thus in God's providence a Christian queen was the means of fulfilling in the central province of Imèrina the prophecy: "The idols He shall utterly abolish." This act of the sovereign had naturally a great effect upon the people generally. "The Queen has burned her idols," they said, "we must burn ours"; and so within a few days the idols of tribes and families and individuals were collected and committed to the flames, and thousands of ignorant heathen people were found gathering together in rude rough buildings and willing to listen to Christian teaching.

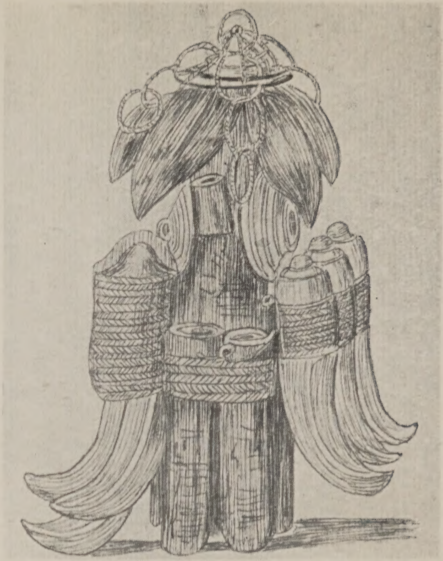
In Malagasy superstition and religious belief, Lucky and Unlucky Days and Times held (and still hold) a prominent place. In some districts as many as seven or eight days in each month are held to be unlucky; and on these days the people dare not go on a journey, or put out a canoe to fish, or even work with a spade in their rice-fields or plantations lest some evil should befall them. Almost all over Madagascar one of the months (which are lunar) called Alakàosy, and another called Asòrotàny, are considered most unlucky for the birth of children. As a rule, these poor infants were mercilessly suffocated or buried alive; in certain cases, however, if exposed to a certain ordeal, by being placed at the gate of the village through which the cattle were driven, they were allowed to live if they escaped death from the hoofs of the animals. In such a case it was presumed that their evil fate through the birth-time had been averted or overcome. The most powerful man in the island for many years, the former Prime Minister, Rainilaiàrivòny, is said to have been born on one of the unlucky times, but escaped death through the cattle avoiding him, as he was laid at the gate of the village belonging to his ancestors.

Even during the last decade, and in the central provinces, it is well known that several instances have occurred of children born on an unlucky month being put to death, generally by the grandmother of the luckless infant. The same thing is done to twins in certain districts, as it is considered a most unlucky circumstance to have such children.

A considerable number of Lucky Stones and Rocks are to be seen all over Imèrina. These are resorted to chiefly by women who are childless, and who believe that by anointing these stones and leaving some small offering, such as a little rice, a piece of money, or portions of a fowl



HEATHEN MALAGASY WITH CHARMS



A MALAGASY IDOL

killed for the purpose, they will obtain their desire and will bear a child. In some places a hole a few inches deep occurs on the top of a round mass of rock, and the people believe that if a pebble is thrown dexterously and pitched right into the hole this also will ensure their obtaining their hearts' desire, whatever it may be. The numerous upright stones, rough unhewn pieces of rock, from ten to fourteen feet high, which are visible on the open downs, seen in the central provinces, are often seen to be anointed with fat or blood by those who still hold them in reverence, as connected with some spiritual influence. From their shape and name, *vàtolàhy*, i.e. "male-stone," some European anthropologists think them to be a relic of phallic worship.

Connected with offerings and sacrifice, the Malagasy used to have an observance called *Fàditra*, a kind of piaculum, consisting of the throwing away of certain objects which had some connection, either in name, or in character, or in appearance, with the evil which it was hoped would thereby be averted. This was done together with the use of certain formulæ and imprecations. For instance, if the divination directed that two was an unlucky number for certain actions, two stones must be thrown away to avert evil consequences; if the numeral seven was pointed out as bringing misfortune, seven beans would be the *fàditra*; and so on. Or if white was denoted as connected with ill-luck, something having *fòtsy* (white) in its name might be directed to be thrown away to prevent mischief. Among the Malagasy, as with many other more civilized peoples, it is believed that there is an intimate and real connection between things (and persons also) and the names by which they are known.

A few words must be said about the *Sikìdy*, a species of divination which had formerly an immense hold upon the people everywhere, and is still, it is believed, practised by many in secret. This divination was worked by arranging a number of beans or seeds in certain columns or rows in a variety of combinations, all of which have a special meaning and were supposed to foretell good or ill fortune in any or everything which the inquirer wished to undertake. The *Sikìdy* was a very elaborate system, and the diviner was a very influential personage. The persecuting Queen, Rànavàlona I, would do nothing, even the simplest acts of everyday life, without consulting the diviners as to the favourable place, time, person, or circumstances in which or by whom they should be done. No doubt there was much trickery and deceit mixed up in it all, together with a large amount of chance, and some cleverness also on the part of those who "worked the oracle."

Happily, its power and prestige have largely come to an end. Education, especially Christian teaching, has taught the Malagasy the absurdity of thinking that seeds or beans can have any power to foretell good or evil. Schools and books, churches and the Bible, are spreading abroad the light, and the darkness is gradually passing away.

CHAPTER IV

CHURCH AND SOCIAL LIFE IN THE RE-ESTABLISHED MADAGASCAR MISSION

When I went out first to Madagascar (in 1863) a heathen queen, Rasohèrina, was reigning in the island; idolatry was still everywhere a great power; the Tangèna poison ordeal and many cruel customs were still practised; and the native Christians were only a small section of the community; slavery was still a national institution, and even Christian Malagasy could hardly understand why we missionaries thought it wrong for men and women and children to be bought and sold in the markets. But the Gospel was quietly and yet powerfully influencing society at large, and a considerable number of the most intelligent younger men were beginning to acknowledge its claims on their understandings and hearts. "The blood of the martyrs" was already proving itself in Madagascar, as in other countries and other ages, to be "the seed of the Church," and was producing its effects on many thoughtful minds, even in those who were not as yet professedly Christian. "The red rain," as Tertullian said of his own times, was already making "the harvest grow."

Eight or nine large congregations had already been gathered together in Antanànarìvo, and there were nearly forty others in villages around the Capital, chiefly to the north, where Christianity has always had a firmer hold than in other directions. And since the country "districts," which subsequently became so large, were then of very moderate extent, the time of each missionary was not so fully taken up with superintendence as to prevent his giving a considerable amount of time and teaching to the large city congregation under his care. It thus came about that all my brother missionaries were able to act for several years as pastors of these churches; and the work they thus did, not only in preaching, but also in Bible-class instruction, and in teaching the children in the church day-schools, was most valuable in raising up a strong and intelligent Christian community in Antanànarìvo, then, as now, the centre of enlightenment and influence on all the country around far or near. These city churches were thus prepared to act as "mother churches" to the districts connected with them, and which became so large after the burning of the idols in 1869, and the acceptance by the Queen and her Government of Christianity.

It must be remembered that there was no mission station away from the Capital until the year 1870; all the missionaries were living in Antanànarìvo; and probably it was wise at first to concentrate our efforts on the most influential centre. There were a number of intelligent young men in the city who were eager for instruction; and as the missionaries held their Bible classes on different days of the week, these young fellows would attend one at Ambàtonakànga on one day, at Ampàribé on another, at Ambòhipòtsy on another, and so on, so as to get all the teaching they could from these different sources. Many of these young men were afterwards the first students in the Theological College, which was commenced in 1869, and several of them became influential pastors and leaders of the native Church.

Here it may be well to note who it was who composed the L.M.S. mission staff on my arrival in the Capital in October 1863. These were first the Rev. William Ellis, of whom I have already spoken (see p. 24), then far advanced in the "sixties" of his life, but hale and hearty and vigorous; he was really the Directors' representative in the island. Those who soon followed him, in the previous year, were the Rev. R. Toy, Rev. W. E. Cousins, Rev. John Duffus, Dr. Andrew Davidson, Mr. C. T. H. Stagg and Mr. John Parrett; Mrs. Toy and Mrs. Davidson had also accompanied their husbands. Mr. Stagg was to take charge of a High School and direct education; Mr. Parrett was a practical printer, and had charge of the mission press; while Dr. Davidson was the medical missionary. About a month before I arrived, Mr.

James Cameron, who had been a member of the first mission in the island (1826–1835) as a carpenter, came up from South Africa, and engaged in work at first for the Native Government; he was in the early " sixties " of his life, but was less vigorous than Mr. Ellis. About the same time also came Mr. Robert Aitkin, of whom I have already spoken in Chapter II. About a week before my own arrival in the Capital, the Rev. Joseph Pearse and his wife, and the Rev. J. Kessler, had also come to reinforce the mission staff, leaving others of their party at Mauritius, to come to Madagascar in the following year. From those who were then in the Capital I received a hearty welcome, and with many of them happy and lasting friendships were formed. Of most of these good friends I shall have occasion to say more as my story progresses.

Our house accommodation at that early time was very different from what we obtained in later years, when the Directors made liberal grants for building suitable and convenient residences for their missionaries, thinking, and surely wisely, that the house where most of them made their home for many years should be as comfortable and home-like as possible, and including a " prophet's chamber," where country brethren and sisters might be entertained at committee meetings and on other occasions, since " a bishop (a New Testament one) should be given to hospitality."

But at that early period of our mission we were all contented " to rough it " in native houses, hired for a time, and do the best possible with them. And I remember seeing my friend Hartley writing a sermon at one end of a table while Mrs. H. made a pudding at the other end of it. As regards myself, I found a home for some weeks in the very limited house-room my good and kind friend Mr. Stagg could give me, until his lamented death early in the following year. Mr. Ellis, I may remark, had given me the choice of two " desirable residences " : first, " a rush lean-to " against a mission house at Ampàribé, which we called " the bachelors' quarters," or, to occupy the attic of the wooden house he himself lived in near the centre of the city, an apartment which had, not long before, been used as the kitchen of the owner, and was black with years of soot. Either of these, he appeared to consider, would give suitable accommodation for the youthful architect of the mission. However, strange to say, I accepted neither of these tempting proposals. My good friend, Parrett, most kindly had a small wooden warehouse in the printing-office yard cleared of its contents, and then had it floored and divided into two rooms, each about 12 feet by 8 feet, one of which served as my drawing-office, and the other as a bedroom, when my friend Stagg could no longer help me. Eventually I had additional rooms made, and in my cosy little dwelling I remained until leaving for England in 1867.

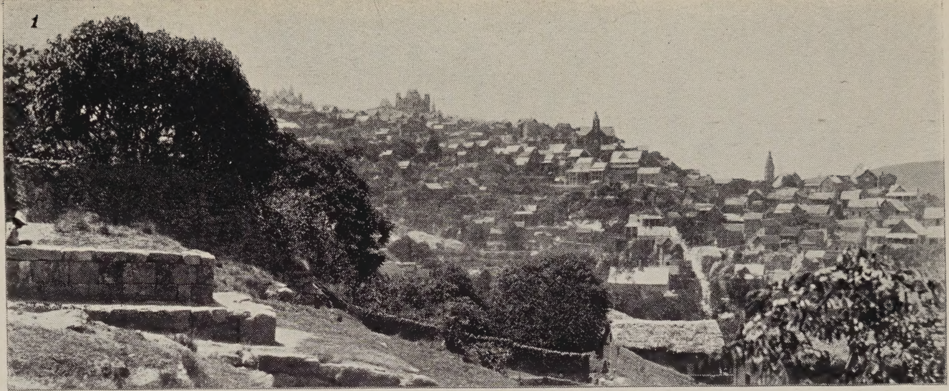
This mention of houses reminds me that it may be well here to say a little about what kind of a place Antanànarìvo was when I first knew it; and but for its unaltered and unalterable physical features, as a town built on the summit and slopes of a long rocky hill stretching two miles north and south, and rising some 600 feet above the great rice plain to the west, it would hardly be recognized as the same place as it was in 1863. It is now a well-paved, well-drained, well-lighted, and well-water-supplied city, with good roads and broad streets cleverly engineered to ascend easily to its higher points, with several small parks, and with trees and flower-beds adorning many a formerly vacant spot, and containing also numbers of handsome buildings. But in the early days of my acquaintance with the Capital it was a dull and sombre-looking place: a dark-brown mass of wooden houses crowded together in the city proper, at the summit of the rocky hill, with high-pitched roofs of dark *hèrana* rush, and with crossed gable timbers or "house horns" surmounting their ridges, giving a very characteristic appearance to a Malagasy house of former times. No building but the two great wooden palaces at the top of the city had any architectural pretensions; there was only one roughly paved road, which was often only the bare rock broken away by blasting; the others were either narrow and difficult steps up and down the city hill, or paths on the red clay soil, where they grew deeper and deeper every year as they were cut away by the torrents of water rushing down them in the rainy season. Antanànarìvo was indeed a very different place in 1863 from what it is now, the change beginning with the French conquest in 1895.

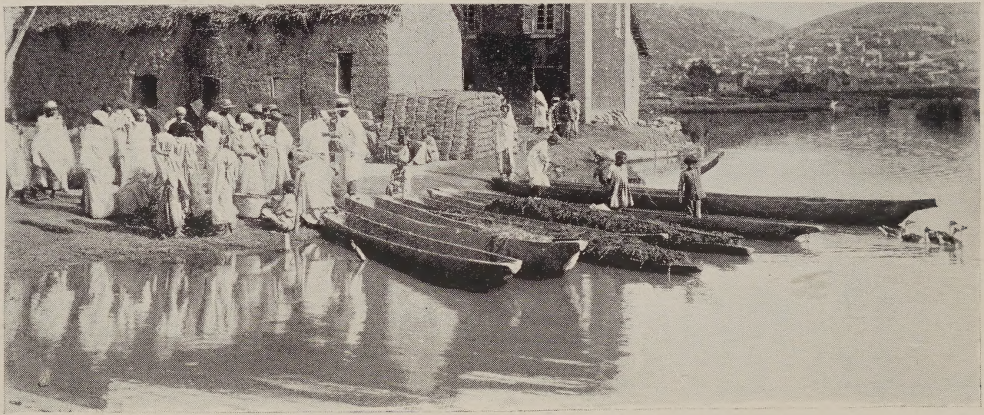
It may be easily supposed that the earliest church buildings in the Capital were of a rough and primitive character. The one at Ambàtonakànga has already been mentioned, and it was really a dark and gloomy place, more like an old cowshed than a building for divine worship. The one at Anàlakèly was an old carpenter's shop given to the congregation by Radàma II ; it was extremely long, but very narrow, so the preacher, placed in the middle, had to turn first to one side and then to the other to address his audience. It had no windows, but there were three or four wide doors, which had to be kept open to admit light and air. The first church at Ampàribé consisted of three or four native houses curiously patched together. However, just before my arrival in Madagascar, the congregation had erected a plain square building of sun-dried brick, and which, when whitewashed inside and with some bordering round the window- and door-openings, appeared to be, when contrasted with others, an architectural achievement of a high order. Other churches in the Capital were of wooden framework, with *zozòro* rush for their walling.

We did not indulge in the luxury of pews or even open benches for the congregation in those days ; and except for a few chairs for the rulers of the synagogue, the people squatted, native fashion, on the rush matting which covered the earthen floors. A table generally served for a pulpit ; and I remember an urgent appeal made to one of my brethren by a native pastor for money to buy a table "from which to preach the Word of God," as if that could not be properly done without such an aid to his eloquence. Sunday services began early then, for the congregations would often be assembled an hour or more before the regular time for the service, which was nine o'clock ; and we always had two sermons, and occasionally *three*, in the morning, the majority of the preachers being old Malagasy Christians, who were good and earnest men, but inclined to be prosy and often very lengthy in their discourses. Our worthy pastor at Ambàtonakànga, Ratsilàinga, would often speak for an hour, and then Mr. Ellis would occupy almost as long a time as his share of the service. It will not be wondered at that while I was still only learning Malagasy, the Sunday morning's exercises were often a weariness to the flesh. For we had then no change of posture all through the two or three hours; no standing to sing, no kneeling to pray, for, of course, with no raised seats, it was difficult to have such variety of posture; and when the congregation did at last rise from their two hours and more of squatting, there was a great dust raised from the shaking of the *làmbas* and the adjustment of dress. On one occasion my friend Parrett had had his chair newly painted, and after sitting through three sermons, as well as the singing and prayers and Scripture readings, when he at length rose up to go, he carried his chair stuck fast behind him!

The singing in those early days was from the hymn-book prepared by the first missionaries thirty or forty years previously, and the tunes to which they were sung were those in use in England at the time when they left their native land for Madagascar, such as "Calcutta," "Rousseau's Dream," "Lydia," "Spanish Chant," "Rockingham," "Mariners," etc., such as are seldom heard now in our home congregations, but are to be found in the *Union* and other old-fashioned tune-books. But what struck me as strange was the *slowness* in which these old tunes were sung; in fact, I could not at first make out what it was that was being sung until it gradually dawned upon me that this and that was a familiar tune, but in such slow time that it seemed something quite different. I have little doubt that this was the time to which these old tunes were sung in England about a century ago, for certainly, within the memory of most of us who are not young, we have greatly quickened the "pace" of our congregational singing in recent years.

Those old hymns and tunes were much appreciated by the older people from their association with former times and with the first missionaries, and still more perhaps from their connection with the secret meetings for worship in the times of persecution. But the younger people wanted something more lively and quicker, and so there grew up a style of singing which was not very edifying or suitable for worship; airs picked up from European songs and band music, or original compositions of their own, which were very unlike our ideas of sacred music. It came about also that in most congregations the singing was led by a band of young women, the majority of whom were slaves, and





(1) ÀNTANÀNARÌVO, FROM NORTH-WEST (2) MALAGASY CANOES

some of them not very fit to take the lead in public worship, so the more intelligent of the native pastors found it often very difficult to control the conduct of the services. On one occasion Mr. Ellis had been preaching from a very solemn subject, and immediately afterwards the singers struck up a lively jig which was so utterly incongruous with what he had been speaking about, that he jumped up and stopped them in his own peculiar style of Malagasy, with the words: "That's very improper, my friends; that's like a fiddle, that's like a dance!" It was seldom, however, that they *could* be stopped so easily. Among the crowd of recent adherents to Christianity there were numbers who carried with them the old native ideas, one of which was that singing was a species of unpaid service that slaves were expected to render to their masters; and so they argued that singing in church might still be done *for* them by their slaves, men and women, and that it was enough for the masters and mistresses to sit and listen and be entertained. In illustration of this native idea, it may be said here that the late Queen Rànavàlona III, while still a young girl, was a pupil at our L.M.S. High School, and once, on being reproved for not joining in the singing with the others, she rather haughtily replied that it was not for princesses to sing; *that* was done for them by the slave girls. However, she grew wiser as she grew older, and as queen she set an admirable example to her subjects in her regular attendance upon, and devout participation in, all parts of public worship.

But something more must here be said about hymns and singing among the Malagasy. As a people they are passionately fond of music and singing, and some of the purely native songs, as unaffected by foreign influence, are very pleasant, although plaintive in style. Yet up to three or four years after the period I am now speaking of (1863–1867), the native language contained no rhythmical compositions. The first missionaries, who laid the foundation of the Malagasy Church, as well as some of their pupils, wrote a number of hymns which were collected together in a hymn-book and printed at the mission press; but, strange to say, none of these were in proper rhythm, although called "long" and "short" and "sevens," and other metres. They were simply prose, with the proper number of syllables for those metres, but destitute both of rhythm and rhyme, and were, as already mentioned, sung to the English tunes in common use here in England at that time. And yet, although wanting in poetical finish, the deep devotional feeling in almost all of them rendered them very precious to the Malagasy Christians who had come through the time of repression and persecution. They were associated with secret meetings for worship; they had been sung in prison by those who were heavily fettered; their strains had been heard just before the spear had put an end to their lives; and some of those hymns had been sung amid the flames which consumed the martyrs at Fàravòhitra. The prayers and tears and groanings of God's people were closely associated with that first hymn-book; and so it naturally possessed a charm for the survivors which *they* could never feel for newer and more correct compositions.

But, as just remarked, the younger people wanted something more lively and exciting. They had heard barrel-organs; their bands played dance and military music; and some of these incongruous and unsuitable airs, with curious variations, passed into the churches. Congregation vied with congregation as to who could get the newest and most taking tunes; the *spirit* of the time and the hymn were little thought of, and singing contests were very common.

I desire to speak with all reverence about such sacred observances as the Sacraments. But it was sometimes not very conducive to a reverential feeling to see the conduct of these solemn ordinances. The glass goblet prepared for the taking of the wine in the Lord's Supper was commonly used first, filled with water, for the administration of baptism; and on one occasion the deacons appeared to think that the water so used was too sacred to be thrown away, so one of them drank it all up! The wine, so called, was generally a preparation of pineapple juice, but made the proper colour by putting into it the red leaves of a certain plant. Some kind of rice cake supplied the place of bread; and I and others of my brethren have sometimes had some difficulty in separating portions of a glutinous preparation of that cereal. Yet I am bound to add here that in the vast majority of our native churches, for many years past, these sacred ordinances have been observed with as much quiet order and reverence as we see in our home congregations. But I am trying to sketch here the earlier aspects of Christian worship as they presented themselves to me during those first four or five years of the re-established mission; and now, many years later, there is no need to alter words written soon after returning home in 1867, when I said: "Although divested of any outward show, often without chalice or paten or flagon and other accompaniments of *our* celebration of the Holy Communion, there is a homage of the heart as far removed from irreverence on the one hand as it is from superstition on the other."

I have already mentioned the length of the sermons we often heard at that time from native preachers; but although their knowledge at that early period was of course much less than it subsequently became, I was often amused and yet delighted with the quaint illustrations which our Malagasy friends often used. Their interpretation of Scripture sometimes provoked a smile, and yet their evident desire to enforce the truth upon the hearts of their hearers made one forget their misapprehension of some portions of the Bible. I was particularly struck with a sermon by a good earnest man, a short outline of which may not be without interest.

He was preaching from the Epistle of St. James v. 14, "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." In his introduction he said: "There are three diseases that I know of that frequently cause death, and these are smallpox, whooping-cough, and *sin*. I know the first is fatal, because I have heard old men say that when it first appeared in the country those who were attacked by it were *buried alive* (!) But now, with regard to remedies, if neither you nor your children have yet had smallpox, go as quickly as possible to the doctor and get vaccinated. As for whooping-cough, the best way to act is to buy some flannel and make warm jackets for your children. But in the case of *sin*, that most terrible of all diseases, there is but one medicine for that: you must go to Jesus Christ, the only physician of souls." With great earnestness he enlarged on the power of sin, and the efficacy of belief in Christ to save from it.

Then, with regard to the words, " Call for the elders of the church," he remarked: " Some people are always grumbling; when they are unwell, they say: 'No one cares about me; nobody comes to visit me; the pastor and the deacons would let me die for anything they care about it.' But how is it likely they should know you are ill unless you send them word? Do you suppose the elders of the church are *prophets*, to know when people are ill, and when they are well, by inspiration? What did Cornelius do when he wanted the Apostle Peter to come and instruct him? He did not rest content with *wishing*; he *sent* men to Joppa to tell the Apostle his needs and his desires. And so you, brethren, if you want help and consolation, don't complain in the way so many do, but *call for* the elders of the church."

" And then 'Anointing with oil.' What are we to understand by this? It seems to me that this has some reference to medicine, for we read that when the Good Samaritan saw the poor man wounded by the roadside, he went and bound up his wounds, pouring in *oil* and wine. So my idea of the meaning is, that when you go to see a sick person, take a little physic for him. Some, however, may perhaps say, 'We are too poor to buy medicine for other people'; but still, you can do something for them without money: you can help to carry them down to the doctor at the hospital." And thus, in spite of his curious exegesis, this good man managed to bring home very important truth with a force and directness of application which better-instructed preachers often fail to effect.

The following incident was related by another native preacher in illustration of the insufficiency of earthly good to satisfy the soul. He said: " There was a certain officer, a rich man, who, when dying, ordered his friends to observe the following ceremonies at the time when, according to native custom, the corpse should be exposed to the view of friends and relatives before burial. They were to fill the burial cloth with money, to surround it with soldiers, to place all his family around, and to stretch out his opened hand. All this was done, and while some wondered, others said: 'See the wisdom of this man; he wishes to show us that all his money cannot purchase life; his soldiers cannot protect him from death ; his relatives weeping around cannot prolong his existence ; he stretches out his hand and asks for *other things now*.' "

Even then many of our Malagasy friends of the more recent converts were impressive and ready preachers ; and their earnestness, Christian experience, and knowledge of the Scriptures made them listened to with delight, so that they were a great power for good.

I was from the first surprised by the reverent manner in which public worship was conducted, especially by the outward respect shown during prayer. Almost everyone had his or her face covered with the folds of the *làmba*, and even young children seemed to know that prayer was a solemn act, and often lay at full length on the ground perfectly still, with their little heads covered by their dress. And yet there was a primitive simplicity that was often amusing, for I well remember one day seeing a little fellow, perhaps only three years of age, but perfectly naked, come to the door of the church, evidently looking in to find his mother. Presently she caught sight of him, and rolling up a little piece of calico into a ball, she tossed it over the other people's heads to him. He quietly unfolded it, threw it round his body in the way the *làmba* is worn, and marched to his place by his mother, without anyone appearing to take any notice of the incident.

Perhaps a sketch of a Sunday in the country, such I used constantly to take, may give some clear idea of a missionary's work at that time. As a lay member of the Ambàtonakànga church, I was put on the " preaching plan," and used to take my turn in visiting the village congregations in our district. Leaving home soon after sunrise—about six o'clock—I generally had a double set of bearers, and we proceeded northwards over the main road—almost the only road that could be called such, because it was traversed every year by the sovereign—in the direction of Ambòhimànga, the old capital, about twelve miles distant. Appearing at first as a dark-green long hill in the far distance, it gradually becomes more and more distinct as we get nearer, until, after about two and a half hours' journey, we approach the foot of the lofty wooded slopes of the town, the houses on which are almost entirely hidden among the trees. Skirting the eastern extremity of the hill, we presently come to a number of houses forming a suburb outside the fosses which mark the boundary of the royal and sacred town. Passing the massive stone gateway guarded by soldiers, we give our name to the officer on duty, and presently arriving, at about half-past eight o'clock, at the plain little mud-walled chapel, we find the congregation assembled, waiting for the English missionary. Although then—and for thirty years afterwards—we were prohibited from entering the town itself, there was no restriction either upon Christianity or foreigners outside its boundaries.

As soon as I enter, the native pastor commences the service and preaches. This good man's family were the hereditary guardians of the idol Rafantàka, but he, of course, as a Christian, would not accept the office, one of considerable profit to those who held it. Then I take the desk, conduct the worship, and preach also, and dismiss the people with the benediction. But they do not seem disposed to go, and we therefore hold a Bible-class, at which almost all the congregation remain. In the course of this, difficult passages are brought for explanation, knotty points are proposed for solution, and many interesting ideas are often suggested by their inquiries. Meanwhile, the people near the chapel have been preparing food for their visitor; and as soon as we finish our class they bring in a roast fowl and a great plateful of rice, and perhaps bananas or other fruit, into the chapel for my dinner. The people turn out of the building while I discuss these, talking at the same time with some of the preachers.

Directly I finish my meal the people all come in again, for a visit from their English friends is only an occasional event, and every moment must be utilized by gaining instruction in one form or another. Sometimes I teach the singers a new tune, carefully drilling them in each part, and with no small expenditure of breath, repeating it over and over again, and yet again, until they have quite mastered it. Then, sermons and texts are discussed, how to divide the subject properly, etc.; outlines of discourses are submitted for criticism, and questions asked. Then we commence the afternoon service; I preach again, and between two and three o'clock take my leave, with the hearty farewells and thanks and blessings of the good people.

Turning homewards, we diverge a mile or so from the main road to visit another village, Lazaina, where they have had already most of their afternoon service. Here I preach again, and then set off home, arriving at Antanànarìvo about sunset, fairly tired, but yet glad and thankful to have been able in any way to help the people, who often seemed hungering and thirsting for God's truth.[1]

A word or two may be said here about the church organization—if such a term can be employed to describe a very simple matter—which was in existence among the Malagasy congregations during this early period of the re-establishment of the mission. Throughout the twelve or fourteen years in which the first missionaries were allowed to labour in the island, they themselves acted as pastors of the two congregations in the Capital, as well as of the two or three small gatherings in some of the nearer villages; and no native pastors or deacons were as yet appointed. During the persecution their worship, in secret and in fear, was necessarily of a very simple character; but as the years went on, some of their number were eventually seen to be more gifted than the rest in exposition of the Scriptures and in exhortation, and were naturally looked up to as leaders and teachers.

As soon as liberty of worship was regained, towards the close of 1861, men such as those just mentioned became informally recognized as the guides and helpers of the congregations; but in some of the country assemblies—some thirty to forty in number—which gathered together during the first two or three years, a class of men who were often only distinguished by their military rank or worldly position assumed, or were given, the leadership, and were known as *lòham-piangònana*, or "heads of congregations." The missionaries felt that this was not at all a desirable thing for the spiritual interests or freedom of the people who had yet had little instruction. And before Mr. Ellis left Madagascar in 1865 a simple scheme of church polity, providing for the election of pastors and deacons by the members of each church, was drawn up by him and submitted to the Malagasy Christians. The *lòham-piangònana* were naturally not very pleased to see their position thus—in most cases—taken away; but the good sense and good feeling of the large majority of the native Christians prevailed, and after discussion and further explanation, the new polity was accepted and acted upon by the churches. The guidance and instruction of the Malagasy church was thus happily placed on a Scriptural basis, and the churches were largely saved from the leadership of an oligarchy of often self-appointed and unsuitable persons.

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[1] In the preceding paragraphs I am anticipating what I was only able to do after a year or two following my arrival in Madagascar, when I had obtained sufficient knowledge of the language.

Other necessary developments of church polity and organization we shall see later on, as our story progresses.

Christmas came, in due course, about ten weeks after my arrival in the Capital, and it was like a bit of home-life to hear, on Christmas Eve, several appropriate hymns sung at our gateway by a party of the singers from our church. But I had a greater surprise when I went into the church the following morning. It was always a dark and gloomy place, but it looked still darker then, for a large proportion of the crowded congregation were in European dress, the men in black suits and the ladies in silks and satins, with marvellous hats, bedecked with ribbons and feathers and flowers. The Hovas are not very dark, but somehow, in their darker clothes, they looked quite a different set of people from the ordinary Sunday congregation. And the change was not pleasing, for nothing suits the Malagasy better than the native dress, mostly white or in quiet-coloured print, with the graceful folds of the *làmba* over it all. The people had not yet got over the late king's patronage of everything European. Happily, this affecting of foreign fashions gradually passed away, and up to the present day it is rare to see a native lady in English costume in our city congregations, although the men who are Government officials, or in European employ, have to appear in uniform or in European dress. The great majority of the men still retain the *làmba.*

It is not easy to explain how this observance of Christmas among the Malagasy Christian people arose. The first missionaries, sturdy Welsh Nonconformists, certainly did not enjoin keeping the season as a religious festival; and it appears to have gradually arisen during the time of repression and persecution. Anyhow, it has a very strong hold upon the native congregations, and the churches are always crowded on Christmas Day, everyone, however slight his connection with religion, making it a point of honour to attend the services of the festival. At that time no other sacred season of the Christian year was observed by the Malagasy, at any rate by those in connection with the L.M.S.

But just before my arrival in Antanànarìvo there was commenced a united meeting of the congregations of the Capital on the first Monday of every month. This was soon called the *Lòha-vòlana* (lit. "Head of the month"), and was intended to be specially a gathering for prayer for missionary work throughout the world—in fact, a similar meeting to those which were very generally held in English Congregational churches at that period, and known as the "Missionary Prayer-meeting." Its proper purpose was, however, but slightly kept in view, and it became simply a service not differing much from those held every Sunday. From the Capital the practice was gradually extended to the country congregations, half a dozen or more of neighbouring villages joining together on the same day for the same purpose. These *Lòha-vòlana* are very popular with the Malagasy, and have continued with undiminished interest up to the present time. No doubt they do some good in bringing the country congregations frequently together, and gifted preachers are constantly sought for to address these united assemblies. There is, however, far too often a display of new tunes and musical compositions of such a character that only the singers who have previously practised them, sometimes for weeks in advance, can take part in them, leaving the congregation only to admire their cleverness. And perhaps it goes without saying that there is generally a display of another kind, on the part of the female portion of the congregation, of silks and satins and fine muslins in their dresses and *làmbas*, together with handsome jewellery. Whether the singing or the fine clothing has anything to do with the popularity of the *Lòha-vòlana*, I will not attempt to decide; but perhaps we need not throw a stone at our Malagasy friends on these points.

This adoption of European dress by Malagasy had some curious consequences, for among the fashions of that period was that of wearing crinolines of large dimensions. We had then, as already noted, no raised seats in our churches, so the congregation sat on the matted floor, occasionally with a cushion brought by slave-girls for their mistresses' greater comfort. But it was impossible to wear a crinoline in that position, so the ladies might be seen outside the door of the church shuffling out of this addition to their dress, which was then handed to one of the deacons and hung up during service on a big nail driven into the mud wall of the building. I do not know what was done at other churches, but this was certainly the case at Ambàtonakànga. This, we see, was a duty of the diaconate not foreseen by St. Paul when he wrote of deacons and their qualifications in the Pastoral Epistles. I fancy they were not always "grave" during some of the proceedings.

Another (to us) curious sight as people left church used to be the taking off of smart pairs of boots or shoes, which gradually became too irksome to feet unaccustomed to such restraint on week-days, and were carried by their owners either in their hand or suspended from a stick over their shoulder. The wearer having sacrificed his (or her) feelings to genteel appearances during service-time, would again rejoice in freedom from conventionalities on the walk home.

In those early times of the mission some of us can remember what curious notions our native friends and our house servants had about borrowing (with and without our leave) our clothes. Requests from the former to borrow one's best "go-to-meeting" suit, to wear at weddings or some other festive occasion, used to be very frequent, and it took a good many refusals and a good deal of persistence before they could be got to understand that such loans were *not* congenial to our feelings. Our servants, however, did not always take the trouble to ask leave, but would borrow coat, trousers, or shirt; and we had occasionally the pleasure of discovering portions of our own dress on the back of cook or house-boy as we sat at church, or as they were carrying us home. With new servants it was a common thing to borrow a table-cloth as a *làmba*; and more than once the mistress of the house has been startled, as her attention has wandered a little from the eloquence of the preacher, to recognize the familiar pattern of her best diaper table-linen enfolding the form of one of her domestics sitting near her. Some of our washerwomen made quite a business of letting out shirts, trousers, etc., as well as various articles of female dress, belonging to their English clients, to native customers for Sunday wear, and so adding to the legitimate profits of their business. In such cases also we have occasionally had the gratification of seeing at church how well our own garments have fitted native wearers of the same.

Life in Antanànarìvo seemed a very different thing in many ways from what it had been in England; besides the difference in climate, language, people and surroundings, it seemed at first very strange to have no evening meetings or services. The Malagasy were not accustomed to go about much after sunset; there were no lights in the streets, rough and dangerous as they were in many places, and we had no lamps in the churches; while during five months at least of the year the rains would often prevent any going about except in case of the most urgent necessity. So morning and afternoon services, at about nine o'clock and three o'clock, were our Sunday arrangements. After a busy life at home in England in church work, and especially as secretary of the Hull Young People's Christian and Literary Institute, it seemed a very different life to have every evening at home, or occasionally at the house of one or other of one's brother missionaries. It was fortunate for me, however, for as I had to be so much out of doors during the day, personally superintending the work of the church building, I was glad of the evenings to do my drawings, and also to study the language by preparing my exercises for my native pundit. After a few weeks Mr. Toy asked me to go to Ambòhipòtsy, at the far southern end of the city hill, and help him teach Sol-fa singing to his singers. And so, for a long time, I used to go there on a Tuesday afternoon and stay to dinner with him and Mrs. Toy in the evening. I prepared for him a number of sheets in the Sol-fa notation, by which we taught the singers the four parts of " Jerusalem, my glorious home," etc., in which they soon became quite proficient.

The following year (1864) brought several changes in the personnel of our mission staff, viz. in the removal by death of my good friend Mr. Stagg, and also of Mrs. Pearse, at Tamatave, where she had been taken, hoping that a voyage to England might restore her to health. But in June we had additions to our number in the arrival of the Rev. R. G. and Mrs. Hartley, the Rev. B. and Mrs. Briggs, and Mrs. Kessler. With the first-named couple I soon became very intimate, as we found out that there was a distant family connection between Mrs. Hartley and myself, as well as having many common friends in Manchester. Their companionship and friendship was one of the great pleasures of my first stay in Madagascar, and I generally spent Sunday evenings at their house. I went there once or twice to be nursed and looked after when I was unwell, and their kindness to a lonely bachelor I always recall with much gratitude. Mr. Hartley was M.A. of London University, and had been a tutor at Airedale College; he was a scholarly and gentlemanly fellow, and subsequently wrote some of the first and best metrical hymns in the Malagasy language. It was intended that he should commence a theological college in the Capital, but this project was not carried out during his lifetime. Later on in the same year there arrived other accessions to our force in the Rev. George and Mrs. Cousins, the former being a younger brother of Mr. Wm. E. Cousins, who had come two years previously; and with them also there then commenced a very pleasant friendship, which was another of the many happy circumstances of my life in Madagascar, for I received from them both great kindness. I was frequently at their house, and as Mr. Cousins took charge of the Ambàtonakànga church when Mr. Ellis left, we were much together; and when I afterwards had a good deal of preaching in the country district, I used to call myself Mr. Cousins's curate.

I was anxious to do some religious work as soon as my knowledge of the language allowed of doing so, although I had little leisure for systematic study; but I began preparing Sunday-school lessons from the Old Testament History as part of my Malagasy lessons with my pundit, an old

Malagasy officer named Rainisòa Ratsimandìsa. I used to write out questions and answers in English and then translate them with my teacher; and although I could not at first always understand what the people said in reply to my questions, I could gather that they were something like what should be the proper answers, and then I would give them my own. And so I got to understand them and to speak to them better as the time went on. When I speak of a Sunday *school,* it would be more correct to call what I did a Sunday *class,* as I was the only teacher, and my scholars were chiefly the grown-up people, who seemed glad to remain for some time after the morning service had concluded. In the same steamer which brought me to Mauritius the Bible Society had sent us out a considerable number of a new edition of the Malagasy Bible, as revised and altered by Mr. Griffiths, then living in England. This edition, besides being in one thick volume, was also in four parts, three of them containing the books of the Old Testament and the other all the New Testament. I bought a number of copies of the first part and gave them to those who promised to attend regularly, as these thin volumes were more handy than the whole Bible. As far as I can recall it, I began this teaching in the early part of 1864. A little before that time Mr. Cameron commenced a similar class at Anàlakèly, and Mr. Parrett one at Ampàribé; and these three classes may be considered as the beginnings of Sunday Schools in Madagascar, although systematic work of this kind (Sunday classes for children) was not begun until several years later. And here I may remark that Sunday Schools were not looked upon with much favour by many of the older Malagasy Christians, because, they said, the first missionaries did nothing of the kind!

About a year after my arrival in Madagascar I began other work in the shape of a week-day Bible-class in my own house for a number of our congregation, who gladly came very regularly for a long time, while we studied the Acts of the Apostles; and with diagrams which I prepared, and Scripture pictures, especially from *Cassell's Illustrated Bible,* I did my best to give my native friends as clear an idea as I could of the scenes and localities connected with the early spreading of the Gospel.

Soon after the arrival of the new missionaries, an English service was commenced on Sunday mornings, after the Malagasy services were concluded. The English ladies especially felt the want of some religious help in their own language, while they were still unaccustomed to the native speech; so the ministerial members of the mission took it in turns to preach and conduct the services, which were held in the Boys' school room in Ambòdin' Andohàlo. The service was discontinued after about a couple of years, when the missionaries were more fully occupied in the country, and the ladies had got to understand Malagasy well and could teach a Sunday class in their own churches.

Among the few breaks in the "trivial round, the common task" of our ordinary life at that time were the opening services of several village chapels, to the north of the Capital, which many of us went to, and so we often formed a large party. We most of us went, I must confess, as much for a little change and variety as for religious motives, and after the services there was often a good deal of harmless merriment. The kind folks of the villages where we went—Ilàfy, Namèhana, Lazàina, and other places—always provided a simple feast for us in native fashion, the invariable fowl and rice forming the *pièce de rêsistance*, with whatever fruit happened to be in season—in fact, bananas and pineapples are to be had all the year through. Mrs. Hartley was naughty enough to call these occasions "religious sprees," but, after all, the fun was very innocent, and our presence was a great encouragement to the little Christian community.

During the course of the year 1865 we had fresh additions to our numbers in the arrival of Mr. Wm. Pool, of whom I have already spoken in Chapter II, and his wife, and of two young ladies, one a widow, Mrs. Irvine, and the other, Miss Milne, who had been appointed by the Directors to commence a Girls' High School. Before the end of the year, however, both were married, the first one to Rev. J. Pearse and the other to Mr. Parrett.

Two or three days after their arrival Mr. Ellis left us for England. He had done good service in many ways during his three years in Madagascar, and his books upon the country and the people did very much to deepen the interest of English Christians in the great African island and its inhabitants.

On July 25th the Mission Hospital was opened, a party of native officers being sent by the Queen to congratulate us, and especially Dr. Davidson, on the completion of the building, and on what he hoped to do for her suffering subjects. Dr. Davidson had already done much for those who were ill by advice and giving medicine at the Dispensary in the centre of the city, but now he was able to treat serious cases of illness much more satisfactorily. So was begun a work for the alleviation of suffering, and also of aiding in spiritual healing, which the Doctor and his successors carried on there for many years, indeed until the opening of the much larger building, in spacious grounds, north of the Capital, in August 1891. Towards the end of the year (1865) we prepared to issue a magazine [1] for the instruction of the Malagasy, and as a medium of communication with the native churches and the people generally; and with the first days of January 1866 we brought out the first number of *Tény Sòa*, or "Good Words." Most of us took part in this beginning of periodical literature in Madagascar; and we were all proud of our efforts, which comprised articles of general information as well as those of a religious kind. My contribution was a paper on "The Steam Engine and Railways."

Printing had been introduced into Madagascar during the time of the first missionaries, and the British and Foreign Bible Society generously helped the L.M.S. mission from the beginning of its work in the island by giving paper and press, and paying the salary of the missionary printer. The complete Malagasy Bible was printed at Antanànarìvo, and also a large Dictionary, as well as thousands of copies of sermons, tracts, hymns, and small books, and these were done by native workmen, who also learnt the art of book-binding.

But during the long reactionary reign of Queen Rànavàlona I, printing had become a lost art, so that on his arrival in the Capital in 1862 Mr. Parrett had to begin afresh and teach a number of young men. Many of these became skilful workmen, so that books of all kinds have for many years past been produced at our mission press, and their work, both in printing and book-binding, will bear comparison with good English workmanship.

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[1] First bi-monthly and afterwards monthly.

As regards the introduction of printing into Madagascar in 1827 Mr. Cameron gives the following account. After describing how that first mission party put together the press—all of them knowing nothing of the art, for the first printer had died very soon after his arrival in the country, he says: "Mr. Jones was now the chief manipulator. The frame was furnished with type in English fashion, and composing commenced. Mr. Jones, assisted by Mr. Griffiths, adroitly picked out the letters one after another, and the ladies present helped them to some, for they also had a hand in the enterprise; at any rate, the first twenty-three verses (or thereabouts) of the first chapter of Genesis were put together, wedged in the iron frame and laid on the smooth flat stone. What next? The leather balls, the printing-ink put on the iron plate, the stone muller to rub up the ink, the two balls well smeared with the ink, then rolled and rubbed and patted together, with trembling anxiety—a little more ink added—then the types inked, or rather well anointed with the ink for some time. Stop now, that will do! Down went the screw with force, and the first page was printed. Most of it could be read, but it was a very perfect blur!"

When one thinks of Madagascar *now* as a well-known country, and with the greater part of it already surveyed and laid down in maps as minutely as in our own Ordnance survey, it is difficult to realize that in the early time of the mission it was unexplored and unknown as regards the interior—the greater part of it at least. The maps which were given in books, including Mr. Ellis's *History*, were mere guess-work. Except the route from the east coast, and a circle of about five-and-twenty miles round the Capital, nothing was accurately known about the physical geography of the country, so that any journey taken beyond those limits had all the charm of discovery. Something was vaguely known concerning the Sihànaka tribe, living about a hundred miles to the north-east of Antanànarìvo, and also about the Bétsiléo people, two hundred miles or so away southwards; while the Sàkàlava from the far west made themselves frequently unpleasantly known by their raids on the outskirts of the Hova territory, when they sometimes swept off hundreds of cattle, and even the inhabitants of whole villages.

I was the first to make (in 1867) a sketch-map of the country round Antanànarìvo, but this was only to show the position of villages where Christian congregations had been formed up to that date. During the first four years of my stay in Madagascar I was only once beyond the limits just mentioned. This was a two days' journey, in company with three other brother missionaries, to the beautiful lake of Itàsy, some fifty miles away west, where we found ourselves in a district full of old volcanoes, many of them apparently not long extinct.

It is not strange that the interest of native Christians in Imèrina was not for some time awakened to the needs of the heathen Malagasy in other parts of the great island. These were " out of sight," and therefore, for long, " out of mind." But concern for extending the Gospel to other tribes of Madagascar was aroused, towards the year 1867, by the congregation at Andohàlo (Antanànarìvo) under Mr. Hartley's care, sending out an earnest Christian man named Rabé as an evangelist to the Sihànaka people, where he did good service for several years. This was the commencement of foreign missionary work by the churches of the central provinces; and it may truthfully be so called, although it was to their own countrymen that the first native missionaries were afterwards sent; for since there were then no roads, the time and expense spent in reaching the Bàra tribe, to whom they were sent, was as much, and done with as much difficulty, as it is for us in England now to reach the peoples of India or South Africa.

The help I obtained from Mr. Pool enabled me to do some other work in church-designing beyond that which was necessary for the Memorial Churches. I was much interested in the nearest village congregation, at Manjàkarày, a place about two miles distant, where, as already mentioned, I had a weekly Bible-class and preached frequently on the Sundays. So it was a great pleasure to me to help them when they resolved to build a new church, by making designs for it and superintending its erection. It was very pleasing to see how the whole congregation, from high officers and their wives down to the humblest slave, all took their share, not only in giving money, but also in hard manual work at the building. The men made bricks (sun-dried), mixed the mortar, and built the walls; the women, several of them ladies of high position, fetched water, mixed the clay and helped the men. And before I left Madagascar in the following year, I had the pleasure of seeing the new church, the finest yet erected in any of the country villages, opened for worship, and of preaching there myself two or three times.

I also designed a church of timber, to be erected in the central place of the Capital called Andohàlo for my friend, Mr. Hartley. By old native law or custom, no building of brick or stone could then, or for many years afterwards, be erected within the city proper, so it had to be of wood. It stood for a long time, and was, I think, an ornament to the city, although from lack of funds it was never quite completed according to my drawings, either within or without. A good house for Mr. Hartley, and a school-house for Ambàtonakànga church were other designs made during those first four years.

The first words of this chapter will remind my readers that heathenism was still a great power in Madagascar, and that many cruel customs were still in force. There was a sad confirmation of this latter statement in an event which occurred in the early part of 1866. One market-day I happened to call at the house of my friend, Mr. Pearse, who lived at Anàlakèly, on the slope of the hill going up to Fàravòhitra, and opposite the rising ground called Zomà, where the great weekly market was held. Between the two elevations there was then a level piece of grassy plain, where oxen were sold. As we were walking together and talking, we all at once heard much barking of dogs and shouting in the market opposite to us, and then we could see a man running among the people with a crowd of men and boys after him; presently he crossed the level ground and seemed to be panting and exhausted, and came towards the pathway passing close under Mr. Pearse's compound. Wondering what it was all about, we called to some of the servants and asked them what was the matter. They replied that the man had been stealing in the market by cutting off the corner of a *làmba* (where the "cut-money" was usually tied up), and that the people were going to kill him. As the Malagasy frequently use the word *mamòno*, "kill," for punishing or beating only, we imagined that this was all that would be done. But presently they came back, exclaiming *Màty izy*, "He's dead!" Horrified by the news, we rushed off to see what we could do, and within a hundred yards from the house we found the poor fellow lying on the ground, completely naked, and bruised and bleeding from the stoning of the crowd. They desisted as soon as they saw us come up, and the ringleaders ran off. We found the man still breathing, so, leaving Mr. Pearse to protect him, I ran to the hospital which was close by to see if Dr. Davidson would receive him and try if anything could be done for him. The Doctor immediately sent one of his assistants and some bearers with a palanquin to bring in the unfortunate victim of mob-law. We took him up and bore him to the building, followed by a great crowd of people, who seemed like wild beasts baulked of their prey.

The Doctor, after examination, found the poor fellow severely injured and to have narrowly escaped with life. Had we been many seconds later, he would no doubt have been killed outright. We soon afterwards sent word to the Queen, informing her of what we had done; and on the following day we received a message from her Majesty, thanking us for our care for the life of one of her subjects, and assuring us that she fully understood that what we did was from humanity, and not from any wish to screen those who deserved punishment. We then found that such summary mob justice was now illegal, and that all offenders ought to be taken before the judges and have a fair trial.

Towards the latter part of my four years, rumours were persistently spread among the people—no doubt by the heathen party and the supporters of the idols—that the Christian religion was to be again forbidden; and it was said again and again that on the next market-day, Friday, the people from the country were to bring with them ropes for binding all those who professed Christianity. These were pure inventions, and there was no ground for believing that either the Queen or her advisers contemplated doing anything of the kind. Still, there was a good deal of apprehension among many of our people; and our good native pastor, Andriambèlo, who had suffered much during the former persecution, and was recognized as one of the leaders of the Christians, was seriously alarmed for his own safety, and for several nights together he took refuge in our compound around the printing office, my friend Parrett providing him a place a security with us, in case of any attempt to molest him.

There was, in reality, I believe, no just ground for fearing any such retrograde step as regards religious liberty on the part of the rulers of the country. During Queen Rasohèrina's reign there was continual progress, both in political and religious matters. For in the treaty concluded between England and Madagascar, religious liberty was secured both to natives and foreigners. To the honour of Queen Victoria, a message was sent from her to Queen Rasohèrina, asking, as a personal favour to herself, that there might be no persecution of the Christians; this wish was embodied in the draft of the treaty sent from England. In compliance with this request, the treaty contained the following words: "In accordance with the wish of Queen Victoria, Queen Rasohèrina engages that there shall be no more persecution of the Christians in Madagascar." This engagement was faithfully kept, not in the letter merely, but in the spirit as well; while by much personal kindness to the missionaries, the Queen showed that, even if she did not understand the highest aims of their work, she still appreciated their efforts for the good of her people, and gave every facility for them to pursue their labours. At the end of the year 1867 there were twelve congregations in the Capital, and eighty-six in the country districts; about five thousand people in church fellowship, and a professedly Christian population of more than twenty thousand.

It may be asked here: "What kind of Christians were those who professed to be such at that time in Madagascar?" And lest I should be supposed to give experience of later times and allow this to colour earlier times, I will quote here what I wrote soon after my return to England. "To such a question I would reply: our Christians in Madagascar are really very much like Christians in England. We have a great variety of Christian character, people of deep religious experience, who have suffered much and felt much; we have earnest and self-denying people; and we have others who, like numbers of Christians at home, do little, and show small proof of the transforming power of the Gospel. Yet considering all the circumstances, the short time we have had to work, and the fewness of the number of the missionary staff, we are often astonished at the undeniable success, at the large amount of real genuine Christian principle, and at the love and faith, and zeal and holiness, manifest in the lives of many.

"It may also be mentioned that, as it was not so much through public preaching or the *direct* influence of European missionaries, that Christianity maintained its position and extended remarkably during the years of persecution, so it has been to a great extent, since religious freedom has been secured. It has, from the first, been mainly spread through the personal teaching and efforts of individual Christians, and by the not less powerful influence of their holy lives and changed dispositions. The heathen have said: 'We knew such an one; he was formerly cruel, untruthful, dishonest; now he is kind and loving, speaking the truth, acting uprightly. This must be a powerful thing which has made such a change.'"

But it is time I concluded this chapter of the book and of my first experiences of Madagascar. It should, however, be here noted in connection with the religious history of the country that during the year before I left the island in 1867, the Norwegian Lutheran Missionary Society began work in Madagascar through the arrival of two missionaries, Messrs. Engh and Nilsen, in the Capital. After friendly conference with us, it was agreed that the district of Vàkinankàratra, about eighty to a hundred miles south-west of Antanànarìvo, should be the principal field of the labours of the Lutheran Society, as well as parts of the Bétsiléo province. The greater subsequent extension of their work, especially when reinforced by the presence of two American Lutheran societies, we shall see in following chapters.

After several farewell services both in town and country, and receiving many affectionate parting words from my native friends as well as my brother missionaries, and also many hopes and wishes that I should return after a time and do more work among them in Madagascar, I left the Capital on May 16th and Tamatave on the 29th, and after a severe attack of malarial fever in a voyage of thirteen days in a "bullocker" to Mauritius, I at length arrived at home at

Hull on August 24th, exactly four years after leaving England.

I will only add that on my way along the coast I met Mr. Joseph S. Sewell, and two American Friends, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Street, who were proceeding to the Capital to commence a mission of the Friends' Foreign Missionary Association.

CHAPTER V

LIFE AS A COUNTRY MISSIONARY

Between the end of the last chapter and the beginning of this one, about three years must be supposed to have passed away (May 1867–July 1870). During that time a great deal had happened : I had returned home to England ; I had begun deputation work ; I had taken a theological course of study at Spring Hill College ; I had been ordained as a missionary to Madagascar ; I had married Miss Deborah Hannah Richardson ; and we two—my wife and I—together with Mr. and Mrs. Wills and Mr. and Mrs. Peake, newly appointed missionaries, had had a voyage of nearly three months to Mauritius, *en route* for the great island to which I had become so much attached.

And much else had happened during those three years. Queen Rasohèrina had passed away and had been succeeded by her niece, Princess Ramòma, who had taken the name of Rànavàlona II ; and much more important was the fact that in the year 1869 she and the members of her Government had accepted Christianity and had been baptized. And this declaration of the Queen's belief had been soon followed by the burning of the royal and national idols, and then by the destruction of most of those belonging to the people. With a nation like the Malagasy, prone to go in crowds and to follow, right or wrong, what their rulers did, it was not strange that these events should cause a great popular movement towards a profession of Christianity. "The Queen has burnt her idols, so we must burn ours ; the Queen has begun to pray, so we must pray," they said.

I found, therefore, on our arrival in the Capital a great difference in many ways of which I had formerly had no experience. In almost every village of importance in the central provinces, rough and plain buildings had been erected in which the people met together on the Sunday for what they supposed to be Christian worship, although in very many cases there was no one to instruct them as to what the new religion really was, and often there was no one who could even read intelligibly a chapter of the Bible. There was therefore an urgent need for more missionaries to guide and instruct the large numbers of people who were ready to be taught; and in response to this need the London Missionary Society largely increased its staff of men and women during this and the following two or three years. The native churches in the Capital also sent out a number of their own members as teachers to the village congregations, until such time as trained and well-instructed pastors or evangelists could be stationed permanently among them. Such permanent workers could not yet be obtained, for they had still to be instructed. My good friend Mr. Hartley, who had returned to England in 1868 in weak health, died at Bournemouth in the early part of 1870; but during the previous year Mr. Toy and Mr. G. Cousins had commenced classes for preachers which presently developed into a theological college, at which many young men were now being prepared for taking the guidance and instruction of the native churches.

My old friends at Ambàtonakànga, as well as Mr. G. Cousins, were pressing that I should stop in town and take charge of that congregation, as Mr. Cousins was resigning his position there, thinking that he could not continue as missionary of a large city and its country district, together with the College tutorship. There was certainly much that was attractive in this proposal. I had been connected with the congregation for nearly four years; it was the first building that I had designed, and of which I knew almost every stone; and I had many dear friends there. But, on the other hand, I had been invited by the Directors to commence a country station at Ambòhimànga, and like my dear father in commencing a new church at Hull, I too felt wishful "not to build on other men's foundations, with things ready to one's hand," but to break fresh ground and commence new work. I felt, with the Committee, that it was quite time that several missionaries should be stationed away from the Capital, and so extend our influence more widely. Therefore, I soon made up my mind, my dear wife quite agreeing with me, that duty called us to carry out the wishes of the Directors. So in about a week after our arrival at the Capital, we went out to Ambòhimànga to see the people there and make inquiries about a house to live in.

The Cousins's accompanied us, and we had a hearty reception from the *three* congregations ; for since the burning of the idols in the preceding year, the single little assembly to which I had preached several times during my first stay in the country, had increased to three large congregations, meeting in good-sized churches. We went to each of the three places and spoke to the people, after which they had a good meal prepared for us. Then we inquired about a house and were taken to a compound just to the north of the "Thursday" market, a large open space about three-quarters of a mile south-west of the town. Here, surrounded by clay walls, a very high one to the east, but open to the view of the country westward and at the sides, were two small, neat-looking cottages of one storey, built of clay, with narrow verandahs round them, which we found we could rent of one of the pastors. As these seemed the most eligible places we could see or hear of, we decided to accept the offer, provided some few things were done to one of the cottages, which we fixed upon for a dwelling ; while the other, which had one fair-sized room and a narrow one at the end, we thought would serve as a study and class-room. The floors were only the earth, but we thought that covered with mats they would do for the present ; and after arranging that the interior walls should be whitewashed, we left, promising to come and settle down as soon as these improvements should be completed.

It was more than three weeks before the various matters were finished, at least some of them, for we did not get a couple of small glass windows put in for many weeks ; but we were anxious to get a home of our own, humble though it was, and commence our work. Most of our heavy baggage—stores, chairs and bedsteads, crockery, linen, etc.—had not yet arrived, but we bought a few cheap plates and other things in the market, and instead of a bedstead we used for some time those of our boxes and cases which had come, and spread a native mattress on these; but as they were not of equal height, our bed was not very comfortable! But we were young and full of enthusiasm, and thought it the proper thing that missionaries should "rough it," and so we did not look upon ourselves as to be pitied at all, although we *had* mud floors, and no glass to our windows, or any carpets to tread on. It seemed a fine thing to have at length a house of our own and to do what we liked in it!

The house we chose to live in had a central room, about 13 feet square, a small bedroom about 13 feet by 8 feet on one side of it, and a smaller one on the other side, which served as pantry and scullery. There was a room in the roof in which we could put boxes and stores, and where our servants slept; and one of three or four small huts in the compound was the kitchen. In the other house I got some boards nailed together for arranging my books, and here I met my preachers and others, and in it also my wife taught her women and girls. It also served as "a prophet's chamber" when Mr. G. Cousins or Mr. Pearse came for Sunday services in villages near to us, for Mr. Pearse's district adjoined our own to the east. From our ground we had a pleasant view of the wooded hill of Ambôhimànga, rising three or four hundred feet above the country round, although none of the houses of the town were visible from our point of view.

As regards servants, the senior pastor of the place let us have two of his or his wife's slaves to help us, we, of course paying them. This was a youngish man named Rainimainty and his wife Ramànga. The former was to fetch water and be generally useful, carrying us occasionally, while his wife was to act as housemaid. (And here I may say that she served us faithfully from that time until the day we finally left Madagascar, in May 1915, nursing all our five children and being devoted to us; her husband, however, died several years ago.) For a cook we engaged a youth from Antanànarìvo, who seemed fairly capable and did well enough for a short time; but he brought a younger brother with him, and between the two we found that our stores, which we could not lock up, began to disappear in a marvellously rapid way; so we soon dispensed with his services and put Rainimainty in his place, and he after being well instructed by my wife became a tolerably good cook.

I shall not easily forget the first meal to which we were called by Ramànga. We had been arranging things in the north house, putting away stores, etc., and she told us that our dinner was ready. Going into our room, which was dining- and sitting- and workroom all in one, we found one big soup-plate piled up with rice, in which two spoons were stuck, and a basin of stewed fowl and gravy placed beside it! This was all that our native domestic thought necessary for our accommodation. "*Two* plates needed ?" she said; "why, are you not newly married, and are you not going, as is usual, to eat from *one* plate ? Do you want people to think you have quarrelled already ?" Thus reasoned our simple-minded girl, quite unused to the mysterious ways of foreigners, with their numerous dishes and knives and forks and other superfluities.

But what was the work now put into our hands ? As already mentioned, the single small congregation of former times had increased and become three large ones. The first plain building, near the eastern gate of the town, had been added to, so as to double its former accommodation, and of this place Rainikòto, son of the former idol-keeper, was pastor. The second one was at the other end of the town, close to the western gate, a part called Andàkana, and here the pastor was a man of little ability. At this church the Governor of the town, an officer of high rank (14 honours), attended, and here he had a high raised platform made for himself, with low railings round it and level with the pulpit platform. The third church was on the northern side of the Ambòhimànga hill (all three churches being on the level ground outside the gates and the deep fosses defending the town), and was called Antsàhamànitra ("At the fragrant Field"). The pastor here was a rather bright, clever man, a son of the Governor. Here there was a large congregation, chiefly of native soldiers and their wives and children, and the history of its formation was rather curious. When the Andàkana church was built, the Governor was very wishful that his son should be chosen as pastor, but for some reason or other a certain woman of the congregation was opposed to this plan, and had sufficient influence to prevent his appointment. The Governor then drafted off a couple of hundred soldiers, and ordered the third church to be built for them and got his son made pastor, and so another congregation was begun.

These three churches thus became " mother churches " of a new mission district (Ambòhimànga), and with them was reckoned a fourth, a large congregation at a village called Imèri-tsi-afindra, about two miles to the south-west of the town. Here three good earnest men had done a great work in gathering together a large congregation, so that the chapel they had built was crowded every Sunday. These four places were originally *zànaka* or " children " of the Ambàtonakànga church in the Capital, and with them several village churches to the north were transferred to us to form our new district; and subsequently several others were apportioned to us, so that eventually we had about twenty-four congregations connected with us. The nearest of these was about a couple of miles away, and the furthest from five to six hours' distance by palanquin.

Here, then, was plenty of work for us to do, for the great majority of these village congregations had only just lately been gathered together, and the people were mostly heathen in all but name and needed the most elementary instruction as to the doctrines of Christianity. Including the pastors, there were a few men who had been Christians during the time of persecution, and knew something very practically of the power of the Gospel; but even these had little knowledge and no training, while the majority of those called preachers were very slenderly equipped for teaching others. On referring to old " preaching plans," I see that we had twenty-three men who were reckoned as " preachers "; and I see also that at most of the services at the four " mother churches " we had *two* sermons, not only because the times of service were longer than they eventually became, but also because the sermons were shorter, in fact they were often merely good advice or admonition.

I soon prepared a " preaching plan," by which I tried to visit these score or so of congregations as often as possible in rotation, the mother churches most frequently, and then the nearer villages, while the further ones had to be content with more occasional visits. And the pastors and preachers were also planned to help all the congregations as far as they could.

I very soon also began classes for the preachers of the town and the nearer villages, and gave them systematic instruction about the Bible, the meaning and special purpose of the different books, etc., as well as on other subjects, especially about preaching and the planning of a sermon. These classes were held on the mornings of Thursday, the day of the large weekly market held close to our compound, so that people attending the market could easily come in and spend an hour or two in learning. This class took up most of the forenoon; and people from places at some distance came to it, not only from my own district, but also from villages connected with those on each side of us.

Another morning was given to the day schools, where I taught geography and Scripture to the children, one of the lads always fetching from our house a large map. Another day, in the afternoon, was devoted to teaching singing; and other times had to be given to examining candidates for church fellowship. Every Friday I had Bible-classes in the country, where I chose four villages as centres, distant respectively one, two, three and three and a quarter hours' ride. At the two furthest of these places, the whole day was taken up with the travelling to and fro, and about five hours' stay there. I used to go regularly through the Bible narrative from the Old Testament in the forenoon, and often taught a new hymn-tune or catechized the children as well. Then there was a short interval for rest and a meal of rice and fowl; and then the people all came in again for another hour and a half, when I went systematically through the Gospel narrative; and as the afternoon shadows began to lengthen and it was time to think of going home, I often felt that I got very near to the good peoples' hearts, for I could answer their inquiries, often remove their difficulties, and make truths and facts plain to them in a way that preaching only could not accomplish. And so I came to regard these Bible-classes as the most valuable means of bringing God's truth to their minds and hearts. Of course one only got the more earnest and already somewhat enlightened men and women to attend these classes;

but I felt that if I could help these few to understand God's Word more perfectly, they in turn might help a much larger circle than I could personally reach or affect.

In the rainy seasons I was not unfrequently caught in heavy rain and a thunder-storm in coming home from the two distant places, but I was mercifully preserved from all harm. On one afternoon, however, as my wife and I were returning home along a high ridge of hill, a storm overtook us, and when our palanquins happened to be only a few yards apart, the lightning struck the ground between us, and I felt a shock like an electric discharge run down my left arm. I realized that we had had a very narrow escape from death. In Madagascar we never felt safe from lightning in a house which had no lightning-conductor; and in native houses which I have seen after a storm, there have been some very extraordinary effects—freaks, so to speak—of the electricity. I used to utilize the many hours spent in the palanquin by reading, and many were the books I studied during those long journeys.

Another experience may be mentioned, because during my many years' residence in Madagascar, I had little to tell of in the way of hairbreadth escapes or perils in travelling, although I must have traversed many thousand miles during my fifty and more years in the country. One Sunday afternoon—it was Easter Day I remember—I went out to my nearest village station to preach, a place about four miles distant from Ambòhimànga. At the foot of a deep valley into which I had to descend, there is a little stream which barely reached above the ankles of my bearers on the outward journey. But as I went on with the service, a heavy thunder-storm came on, with the usual torrents of rain, and soon the big drops began to come through the rush roof, and quite a little stream of it poured down exactly where I was standing. However, a big market umbrella was procured, and held over me as I was preaching. The storm and rain cleared after an hour or so, and I set off homewards. But as we descended the steep hill-side, I saw that many people were standing on either bank of the stream, and getting down to it we found that the ankle-deep river of two o'clock had become, like Ezekiel's river, " waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed through." A deep rushing torrent was raging through the gorge, and the people were afraid to ford it. At first my bearers thought we must go a mile or two higher up the valley, but after a while they determined to attempt it, so, stripping off all their clothes and tying them in bundles on their heads, they took up my palanquin, and holding me high up to keep my feet out of the water, they plunged in. The water was well up to their chests, and they had hard work to get any foothold ; but two of the six helped to keep the four from being carried away ; but it was all that they could do to struggle through. The weight of the palanquin with my own no doubt helped the bearers ; and I was very thankful to get safe across, for had I been carried down the torrent, I should probably have been drowned, small as the stream was.

On another occasion I was returning from the north, from one of my annual fortnights of school examinations, and had to cross the River Manànara at a place where I had not passed through it previously. Here the men sent one of their number ahead to test the depth, and as he decided that it was practicable, although deep, because the current was slow and gentle just there, my men took off everything they wore and cautiously stepped into the water, holding me high up at arm's length. Deeper and deeper it proved, as they felt their way step by step, until it reached their necks ; and now the taller men had the advantage, for the short ones had to jump up now and then to take breath, for the water was above their mouths ! The river was broad there, and I was glad when the depth gradually decreased and we reached the shore in safety.

In a three-months' journey to the south-east districts, my companion and I had a variety of experience in canoes, for as much of our travelling was along the coast, we had to cross numerous rivers. And the canoes were of all sizes and in various states of repair ; some were so small that only one of us could be taken with the paddler ; some had one end rotted away, and its place imperfectly supplied by a lump of red clay ; sometimes there was no paddle, and the owner's feet served instead ; and at other places there was no canoe at all, because it is *fàdy* or tabooed to use canoes on that river. At two or three ferries the only means of crossing a large river was by a bundle of bamboos tied together and called a *zàhitra.* And of all the primitive ramshackle contrivances ever invented for water carriage, commend me to a *zàhitra.* The first one we saw consisted of about thirty to forty pieces of bamboo, from ten to twelve feet long, lashed together with bands of some tough creeper, which said bamboos were constantly slipping out of their places and needed trimming at every trip and the fastenings refixed. The *zàhitra* would only take two boxes and one man at a trip besides the rower, and when loaded was from a third to a half of it under water ; and as paddles as well as canoes were equally tabooed, a split bamboo had to serve instead. It may easily be imagined that with fifty men, and a large quantity of baggage to be ferried over, the operation took several hours, and that my companion and I each took a sitz-bath in crossing.

Although I have spent many a night in a forest village, I have never had the misfortune to be benighted in the woods. But one of our missionaries and his wife, when staying at the Friends' Sanatorium, which is close to the edge of the upper forest, lost their way, although within a mile or so of the house, and had to stop all night among the trees, making the best resting-place they could with dry leaves. Fortunately, it was not in the rainy season, or their adventure might have had serious consequences. Their servants could have found them out and have brought them home, but they dared not call out for fear of offending the spirits which lurk in the dense woods !

My dear wife was very anxious to be able to teach the women and the children, and soon began to do what she could to instruct them in needlework, and then to use the knowledge she gradually obtained of the language to teach them catechism and Scripture, etc. Living alone in the country as we did, she got a working knowledge of Malagasy more quickly than most of the ladies in the Capital who were seeing other English people every day.

In many respects our position as country missionaries was a very desirable one for anyone earnestly wishful to do good to the people. But there soon appeared certain difficulties and hindrances to our work. The first one was the opposition of the Governor to us and our influence.

Until our arrival he had been the head of everything, in the church as well as the state, and had been accustomed to tell the pastors and the people what they should do. Of course I could not recognize that he had any authority at all in religious matters, and when I asked the four pastors to come one day and have tea with us, and have a talk about church business, he told them they were not to come unless he was invited as well! and they came to say that they were afraid to disobey him. I managed eventually, however, to get them to come and meet me; but in several ways he showed how he resented my action and would hinder my work if he could do so, as will be seen later on.

In consequence of the royal acceptance and patronage of Christianity, large numbers of the people had been received into church fellowship, although altogether ignorant of what it meant and what it involved. For numbers of the so-called pastors were quite unfit for such an office, and were often chosen because they were the most important men in the village, utterly untrained and unable to preach; and they thought that the more people they baptized and received as church members, the more would they be regarded as loyal subjects and as pleasing the Queen and the Government. I found, therefore, a large number of people in the three Ambòhimànga churches (I do not mean the buildings, though this was true of them, too) who, I could see, were quite ignorant of the elementary truths of Christianity, and ought to have had a year or two's careful instruction before being received as church members. So that for a long time after settling at Ambòhimànga, my chief difficulty was to prevent crowds of utterly unfit people being received into the churches. And this was the same all over the central provinces, and formed the chief weakness of scores of our churches for many years subsequently.

There is no doubt at all that in numbers of instances a great deal of pressure was brought upon the people by local governors and other officials to build churches and to make them attend religious services. Those in authority thought that the end justified the means; besides which they thought they would be accounted as disloyal if they did not make the people do as their sovereign did. The words in the Gospel, " compel them to come in," were very literally carried out in many places. It is true that the Queen had said at her coronation that " the praying " was not compulsory, but for all that, her name and example were used as very strong inducements to make her subjects " pray " also.

In illustration of this action of Government officials it may be mentioned that Dr. Davidson, in travelling southwards to Bétsilèo in 1871, stopped for his midday meal at a village chapel one day ; and while there he noticed a large round stone, which he could hardly lift, by the side of the door. " What is this for ? " he asked one of the deacons. The man replied : " Do you see yonder hill ? " pointing to one about a mile away from the village ; " if any of the people here are slack in coming to worship, we oblige them to carry this stone to the top of that hill and back again, to make them more diligent in the future." At another place, people who were similarly in fault were made to go on their knees all along the fosse, often deep in mud and water, surrounding the village. And at other places the soldiers were sent round the village to bring the people to the services. Of course the missionaries did their utmost to discourage all such proceedings, but how could one man keep an eye on thirty or forty and more village congregations ? And with regard to the wholesale admission of people to church fellowship, the Union of Churches (or *Isan-ènim-bòlana,* as it is called) had only lately been formed ; and although it had made rules about the instruction of people before being baptized and becoming church members, much of the mischief had already been done, and the authority of the Union to make such rules had not become generally acknowledged.

I ought to have noticed before this digression that I commenced my work in Ambòhimànga, " opened my commission," so to speak, on Sunday, July 31 (1870), when I preached in the morning at Ambòara and Antsàhamànitra, and in the afternoon at Andàkana and then at Imèritsiafiùdra. At each place I addressed the people from the words of St. Peter to Cornelius and his household : " Therefore also I came without gainsaying, when I was sent for ; I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me ? " And so we commenced our work in the first country station in Madagascar, and went on quietly and steadily in the different branches of it already described for several months.

Every month, however, I had to go into town for a day or two to attend our District Committee meetings, for at that early time in the history of the Mission there was so much to attend to and arrange that it was necessary to meet very frequently to get things into order and to put mission work on a firm basis. Of course much of this arose from the immense increase in the congregations following upon the royal adhesion to Christianity.

A month after our arrival at Ambòhimànga I paid my first visit to three of the country congregations in the district; and from that time I divided my Sundays pretty equally between the four "mother churches" and those in the villages away north. I felt it to be most important that these first four, which had now become leaders of the district, should be well instructed, and so it was necessary to give them a large proportion of my time and energy.

The *lòha-vòlana,* or united monthly meeting of the congregations, both in town and country had largely lost at Ambòhimànga, as elsewhere, its proper character as a meeting for prayer for the extension of Christ's kingdom, and of preaching or speaking with that end specially in view. So I did my utmost to prevent its becoming, with our people, just a preaching service, differing in nothing from those on the Sunday; and I tried to impress upon them the duty of thinking of and praying for the mission work in their own country and in other parts of the world. To promote this I gave, as time went on, addresses on such subjects as the following, in addition to sermons of a distinctly missionary character: "The London Missionary Society," "Robert Moffat," "China," "Savage Island," "New Guinea," "John Williams," "Tahiti," "The Bible Society," "The Idolatry of the Ancient Britons," "India and its Idolatry," etc. And journeys subsequently taken into other parts of the country also gave me subjects for making the people think of the utterly unenlightened provinces of their own great island.

Another kind of work also began to make demands on my time. As simple instruction in the elementary facts and teaching of the Gospels seemed much needed for country preachers, who had hardly any book but the Bible itself to help them, and some of them perhaps had only a Testament, I commenced, at the request of my brethren, to prepare a series of fifty-two lessons, one for every Sunday in the year, taken from the Gospel of Luke. These were given in separate leaflets of four pages each, loose, in the monthly issues of our magazine *Tèny Sòa,* and were continued through the years 1871–1873, and I hope were of some service to the numerous congregations gathered together in the months following the burning of the idols. The Gospel of Luke was chosen not only because it is specially the Gentiles' Gospel, but also because, by the generosity of the Bible Society, a large number of copies of Luke had been granted to us, and these were given to all those who could read them. These lessons were afterwards collected together and reprinted in a volume of 172 pages, and two other editions were subsequently issued. I wrote these lessons so that they could be used as sermons as well as for Bible-class teaching, giving a number of notes, explanatory of places, people, Jewish festivals and customs, etc., and I believe they have been found helpful by many of our country pastors and preachers.

On our first Christmas Day at Ambòhimànga, which happened to be a Sunday, I had to preach at all four of our "mother churches," two in the morning and two in the afternoon, for I could not make any difference between them. My dear wife used to go with me sometimes to the country congregations, and on one Sunday about this time she went with me to our nearest village church for the afternoon service. Sitting among a crowd of native women, she was startled during one of the prayers by what she thought must be a mouse moving about near her feet, but on looking down she saw that one of the women squatting close to her was counting how many petticoats she had on and showing them to one of her friends! Having themselves often but one garment besides the *làmba,* these native women were evidently astonished at the multiplicity of dresses worn by the foreign lady who had come amongst them.

We went together now and then to a country chapel-opening, when a feast in native fashion would be prepared, of which we were asked to partake; and I remember how we could hardly join in the repast when we saw one of the women handing round (lit. "handing") great lumps of fat pork, which she put on the heaped-up rice on everyone's plate. And the knives, forks and spoons I met with were often not very inviting, that is, when there were any; for I have sometimes had an old clasp-knife given to me to cut up a fowl with; at other places I have had an old razor handed to me for the same purpose. Later on I took the precaution of taking knife, fork and spoon with me when "dining out" in the country.

Before the birth of our little son on August 13, 1871, we had got our landlord to build us an additional room for a bedroom, a little more spacious than our first apartment of that kind. In due time he was baptized by our good friend Mr. G. Cousins, when he received the name of "James Wilberforce," after his two grandfathers. And what new brightness and joy did not this baby bring into our home! And how we, his parents, advanced in dignity in the estimation of our Malagasy friends in our having a child in the house. That little boy, although not very robust at first, grew up to be a healthy lad; he has always been a source of great happiness to us; and we thank God that he early became a sincere follower of Christ, and eventually became a missionary like his father, and a minister like his grandfathers and great-grandfathers, and so has carried on the "Apostolical Succession" to the fourth generation in the family and in the name of "Sibree."

We soon made up our minds that we could not consider our houses at Avàratr' Alakamìsy as our permanent residence, and we therefore began to look about for a site for a new house. We found a position on higher ground, which we thought would be healthy, a spot about a quarter of a mile from the eastern gate of Ambòhimànga and called Antòby ("at the Encampment," from being a place where Radàma I is said to have encamped on one of his war expeditions). Here we agreed with our senior native pastor, Ràinikòto, that he would build us a house, according to plans which I prepared. It was arranged to have four rooms on each of the two stories, one large one on the ground floor to serve as a study and class-room, all of which we thought would give us ample room, as well as accommodating our servants. The main front was to face the south, with a very extensive view, the Capital on its hill showing prominently eleven or twelve miles away, and the *massif* of Ankàratra bounding the prospect to the south-west, some forty to fifty miles in the far distance, but silhouetted clearly against the sky. We thought it would be a healthy position, as it proved to be, although a little cold in the winter months ; but as fire-places were planned for most of the rooms, we thought that this need not deter us. It was conveniently near the chief and largest church, that at Amboàra, only five or six minutes' walk, so that the people could easily come to us from the town, and we as easily go to the church.

In the August and September of 1871 the Queen and her court and a large number of the people—several thousands in fact—including all the chief officers of the Government, the higher military and civilians, together with their wives and families and their slaves, came out to Ambòhimànga, after the *Fandròana* or New Year's fete, and stayed for four or five weeks. All the houses in the upper part of the town were crowded to excess, and it must have been very inconvenient for the inhabitants as well as for the strangers from town. And these royal visits brought much inconvenience to us, especially on the Sundays, for the Queen, thinking—and I dare say quite sincerely—that if she called all the surrounding people to come and worship with her at Ambòhimànga this would promote Christianity, used to order all the churches for several miles round to be closed. Now we could not go up into the town, for, by a provision of the treaty with England, all foreigners were debarred from entering it ; and our three churches just outside the gates were closed as well as all those for a considerable distance in every direction. Again and again we were told we might go to such and such a place next Sunday, as the church there would be open for us ; but on going there, we would find the building closed and the people hiding in their houses. They believed, indeed, that they would be considered disloyal if they opened their church for us. It may easily be supposed, therefore, that we looked forward with little pleasure to the Queen's visits, and tried to be in Antanànarìvo, if possible, for some part of the time.

On one occasion I got into serious difficulty for having too plainly expressed my opinion as to the effects of the closing of so many of our country churches for a month at a time every year. I had pointed out that numbers of the people in the villages, the children, the aged and infirm, nursing mothers and many others, could not go long distances, and so were left without any religious service or instruction for many Sundays. Although these remarks were made in a private letter to an apparently friendly officer, they were reported by him to his superiors and gave great offence.

After eighteen or nineteen months of work, we were glad to have three or four weeks' holiday, and this we took at a place a good day's journey away, at the edge of the upper line of forest, at a little hamlet called An-drànga-lòaka. In those days we had no Mission Sanatorium either at Ambàtovòry or at Ankèramadìnika, but Dr. Davidson had had a house built for him by the former Prime Minister, and he very kindly allowed us and others of his friends the use of this for a holiday. The little village of a dozen or so houses was on the road from the interior to the port of Màhanòro, and our route there from Ambòhimànga took us through the mission station of Isoàvina. The house was very near the forest and was a two-storied one of six rooms. The lower ones were rather damp, so we only used them for meals and for our little Sunday services, but there was a comfortable sitting-room, as well as the bedrooms, opening on to the upper verandah. We greatly enjoyed our stay there and our rambles in the beautiful forest, which always presented something new to interest us, with its luxuriant vegetation, its wealth of ferns and mosses, its climbing plants, its bird and insect life, as well as the wide prospects from the high grounds over the upper belt of woods, with the open Ankay plain beyond, and the lower and greater forest beyond that again.

We soon found out pleasant walks and shady spots where we could sit and read aloud, and in this and subsequent visits I read to my dear wife not only light literature, but also more substantial mental food in such books as Masson's

Life of Milton and his Times, Macaulay's *History,* and Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic* and *History of the United Netherlands,* as well as many others, including travels and natural history.

Our ordinary work was varied now and then by a journey to other parts of the central province, as when I went with my friend Mr. W. E. Cousins to advise upon the position of a new mission station to the west, when Ambòhibelòma was settled upon, and became the scene for many years of the labour of Mr. and Mrs. Peill and Mr. Pickersgill. Another such journey was with my good brother Montgomery to fix the site of the mission house for a new station away east of the Capital, at Isoàvina, where Mr. and Mrs. Peake did valuable service for nearly forty years. And again, when we both, and the baby boy, too, had a few days with our friends the Striblings at the station of Fihàonana in Vònizòngo, where the Matthews's also laboured for several years. On the Sunday we spent there I preached in the station church in the afternoon, but accompanied my friend in the morning to a village chapel, where I was much astonished by the voice of a native pastor in offering prayer. It was in a distinct musical strain, rising and falling in a regular cadence in every sentence, something like intoning—which he had certainly never heard—and yet different. I never heard anything like it anywhere else, or by anyone else.

On returning home what a delightful change it seemed, to see again the variety of country round Antanànarìvo—the great rice-plain, the winding Ikòpa river and its tributaries, the remains of old forest on Ambòhimànga, Ilàfy and other ancient towns, the rocks and the hills and mountains—compared with the bare, dreary and uninteresting and unvaried country round Fihàonana.

Our holidays at the edge of the forest were varied two or three times by a visit to a place, Màntasòa, which we passed on the way to Andràngalòaka, and which was about three miles on this side of it. And near Màntasòa was a place on the road we always looked forward to with dread, viz. a bridge over a narrow but deep piece of water. This consisted of a single round pole, and it was a nervous experience to see the wife and baby carried over by two men, dexterously balancing themselves and their load over this slippery surface. I generally distrusted my own or anyone else's feet over this bridge, and sat astride on it, hitching myself over to the other shore.

Màntasòa was a place worthy of remark as connected with the industrial progress of the Malagasy. During the long reign of Rànavàlona I there happened to be two Frenchmen, brothers named Laborde, who were shipwrecked somewhere in the south of the island in the year 1831, and eventually made their way up to the Capital. They soon ingratiated themselves with the Queen; and as one of them at least, M. Jean Laborde, showed himself very versatile in his ability to do things and to manufacture a variety of useful articles and substances, he became a great favourite with her despotic Majesty, and after some time he was settled at this same Màntasòa, where he constructed a number of substantial buildings for workshops, foundries, brick- and tile-works, potteries, etc. There was a small river running close to the works, and this was partly diverted and brought by pipes and channels to turn several large water-wheels, which gave the power required in the various manufactures.

A large village was built near the works to accommodate the workpeople, generally about 2,000 in number; but as this was government service, they received no pay except a trifling present now and then. M. Laborde, however, generously divided among the workers a large sum of money (15,000 dollars) which the Queen gave him when he presented to her the first brass cannon he had cast. Many native Christians were employed here year after year as a punishment for their religion, and their service was made particularly severe, as they got no day of rest, but had to work continuously. I heard a good pastor in my district relate how hard he had to labour in quarrying stones for the buildings. The Màntasòa work was oppressive upon all the people, and so a proverb arose which may be translated thus, when speaking of forced service: "It's a Màntasòa business: if you go away without leave, you are fined a florin; if you get leave to go, you must pay eightpence." (Such sums *then* were equivalent to at least *ten* times the same nominal amounts *now*.) Guns, powder, cannon and shot, brass, steel, swords, glass, lime, paints, ink, sugar and pottery were among the things manufactured at this place. At the time of our first visits to Màntasòa, the walls of a number of the workshops still remained, although almost every fragment of wood had been taken away, except two or three massive shafts of the water-wheels. But the largest building was a stone structure, about a hundred feet long and twenty or thirty feet wide, with lofty walls seven or eight feet thick, like a castle; this was the foundry. A stone furnace and kiln, for firing pottery and annealing glass, was also almost perfect. The other buildings, however, and the workers' village were simply shapeless ruined walls, being made of clay or sun-dried brick.

During my visits to the country villages in my district, both on Sundays and weekdays, I was impressed with the needs of the congregations for more instruction. We had then no evangelists (assistant missionaries) trained at the College available for placing in the country, so I induced the Ambòhimànga mother churches to send out four good men as evangelists to live in as many of the principal villages of the district, and to give them a small monthly salary (I think it was not more than a dollar a month !), while we urged the people amongst whom they were placed to give them as much rice as they needed. These four men had had no training except a little instruction in my preachers' classes ; but they did much good and helped the people until the time, a few years later, when college-trained evangelists were settled in the district. Besides this, it was right for the stronger and more enlightened churches to feel that they had a responsibility towards their weaker and less instructed brethren.

On April 11, 1873, I began a Good Friday service at Ambòhimànga. This was quite an innovation, but I could never understand why it should not be a spiritual help to our people to have one day in the year when they would have the foundation facts of their religion brought specially before their minds. If it is right and profitable to remember our Lord's birth at Christmas, what reasonable objection can there be to recall His death on Good Friday, and His resurrection on Easter Sunday ? No doubt the Puritans and the early Nonconformists were right in ignoring the great majority of church festivals and saints' days, but they certainly rejected also some observances which were profitable and helpful. So I felt that there was no need in Madagascar to keep up old disputes and prejudices; therefore I made the attempt, and found that the people appreciated very much such a service. This I made not a preaching occasion, but one consisting chiefly of a reverent reading of a combined narrative of the betrayal, the trials, the condemnation and the crucifixion of our Lord, interspersed with appropriate hymns and short prayers.

The precedent I thus set was soon followed in Antanàna̒rivo, first at Ampàribé only for a few years, then gradually other churches commenced similar services; so that the Good Friday observance is becoming common, while Easter Sunday and Whit-Sunday are also being observed in many of our L.M.S. churches in remembrance of the great events they recall. It will surely be in every way helpful and profitable for our Malagasy Christians if they, together with "the Holy Church throughout all the world," reverently remember at these sacred seasons the Birth, the Death and the Resurrection of their Lord, as well as the descent of the Holy Spirit upon His first disciples, the birthday, in fact, of His Church.

I have already mentioned that we used at that time to have mission committee meetings every month; but I often felt that at these times our thoughts were almost entirely occupied with matters of business, and that the higher aspects of our work were almost forgotten. I therefore proposed to my brethren that we should have a quarterly meeting at each other's houses in rotation, at which a paper should be read upon a subject previously agreed upon, followed by discussion; and when we might talk together about various departments of our work and its difficulties, etc., and help each other. My suggestion was very favourably received; these meetings were commenced and kept up for three or four years, and several interesting and suggestive papers were read. At one of these meetings our venerable elder, Mr. Cameron, gave us an address on "Recollections of Mission Life in Madagascar during the Early Days of the L.M.S. Mission." This was full of shrewd and often amusing reminiscences, and threw much light on that period of mission history; and it was afterwards printed. At another meeting, I read a paper on "The Aims and Methods of Bible Revision," for it had already been proposed that our Malagasy Bible should be thoroughly revised; and at another again, Mr. W. E. Cousins read a paper on "The Translation of the Malagasy Bible"; this paper was also printed, and in its appendixes were given some curious-looking extracts from early versions and translations.

In this year, 1873, I was elected chairman of our Imèrina District Committee; and at this time, and for several years afterwards, this position also included the chairmanship of the *Isan-ènim-bòlana*, or Congregational Union, so that at its half-yearly meeting in November, I gave the opening address, taking as my subject, "The London Missionary Society," for I wanted to show our Malagasy Christians what that Society was to which they owed so much, and also what a great work it was doing in many other parts of the world.

Three months before that meeting, however, came an important event for our mission in the visit of a Deputation from the Directors of the L.M.S. This consisted of the Rev. Dr. Mullens, Foreign Secretary of the Society, and the Rev. John Pillans, of Camberwell, one of the Directors, and with him was Mrs. Pillans. We country brethren and sisters almost all came up from our stations to meet our visitors, and Mr. Shaw also came a little later from the Bétsiléo mission, which Mr. Richardson had commenced just after we began our work in Ambòhimànga in 1870. It was many years since Madagascar had been visited by a deputation from the parent society; indeed, there had been none since the visit of the Rev. D. Tyerman and Mr. George Bennet in 1828, forty-five years before; and the great expansion of the work in the island since it was re-opened to Christian teaching in 1861 made it very desirable that all departments of our labour should be reviewed and fully discussed with representatives of the Board. Our friends did not make the hasty visit which later deputations to this and other countries have been obliged to make, for they stayed in Madagascar for just twelve months, and so had ample time to visit all the stations of the Society—more numerous then than they are now, however—and to have the fullest consultations with all the missionaries, as well as with the native Christians and the churches.

Dr. Mullens was a very bright, clever man, a good administrator, a picturesque writer, with a vivid sense of the beautiful in nature, and a genius for topography. He was also an able cartographer and prepared, during his visit, the first reliable map of the interior provinces of Madagascar; and after his return to England he made a large-scale map of the whole island, embodying in it all the geographical knowledge of it then available.

Mr. Pillans was a graver and more sedate personality than the Doctor, a man of good judgment and a wise counsellor. During the intervals of journeys which he and Dr. Mullens made, Mr. Pillans acted as a kind of chaplain to the mission, holding English services on the Sunday.

At the time of the arrival of our friends (August 30th), the Queen and her court were away south on a visit to the Bétsiléo province; so after a few days the Deputation travelled to Fìanàrantsòa, where they were kindly received by her Majesty, and were also able to see the mission work there and settle some questions as to future stations, etc. In December they visited the Vònizòngo district, and the station at Isoàvina, and also came to see us at Ambòhimànga.

As already mentioned, I gave the chairman's address at the I.E.B. meeting in November 1873, for in the early days of the mission the half-yearly meetings were held in November and June. But it was soon found that this first date was too near the rainy season for many to attend from distant places, and eventually the dates of the meetings were altered to April and October.

During this year I prepared, in conjunction with my friend G. Cousins, a little manual or "order" for the observance of the Lord's Supper, a form which, with some additions, has been in use ever since. Early in the following year, I edited a new edition of an *Introduction to the Books of the New Testament*, and writing the section on the Epistle to the Hebrews. But in the December of 1873 I was appointed one of the three L.M.S. delegates on the committee for revising the Malagasy Bible, and I attended the meetings which were held in Antanànarìvo, at first for a month at a time and afterwards for one day every week, generally riding there on horseback from our house for the meeting on Tuesday mornings at eight o'clock. These were held at Mr. W. E. Cousins's house (for a long time afterwards the " Rest House ") at Fàravòhitra, as he was the chairman and chief reviser. This revision work was very congenial to my tastes, although it involved a good deal of labour and physical fatigue. I had to leave home at a little before six o'clock, ride twelve miles, be at work with the committee six hours, and then ride home, generally arriving there at about half-past six o'clock. I took part in the revision until April 1876, when Mr. Cousins left for his furlough in England.

I mentioned just now riding on horseback. I was frequently in such difficulty from being unable to get bearers for the palanquin, that I bought a pony to carry me about and be less dependent on men. But from my never having been accustomed to riding, I was off his back nearly a dozen times during the first two or three weeks, and later on in coming into town I was twice thrown over his head. This made me still more nervous; however, he did me good service for a year or two, but when we removed into the Capital in October 1876, I had to sell him, as I had not sufficient outdoor work to employ a horse.

In the month of January 1874, a Conference of all our Imèrina L.M.S. missionaries was held in Antanànarìvo, and to this those also of the Friends' Mission (then very few in number) were invited. This was summoned by the Deputation and lasted for six days, Dr. Mullens arranging an excellent programme and requesting different missionaries to prepare papers on the various departments of our work, to be followed by free discussion. Our meetings were held in the Fàravòhitra Memorial Church, the first two or three rows of benches being removed to make room for chairs, in which we sat in a large semicircle round the platform where Dr. Mullens presided. These times were very interesting and enjoyable, and were very successful. The subjects discussed were well adapted to cover almost all our work, for we had papers on the College, Higher Education and Day Schools, the work of City and Country Missionaries, on Redistribution, on the Discipline of the Native Churches, on Bible Revision, on Literature and School-books, and on the Extension of Mission Work to other Tribes. We met both in the morning and afternoon of the six days, and Dr. Mullens drew up resolutions after each paper, which embodied the main principles agreed upon, and the result of the whole was very satisfactory. I contributed two papers, one on "Village Churches and Mission Houses," with suggested plans; and the other on "The Instruction of the Native Churches," laying special emphasis on systematic Bible-class teaching. All the papers were subsequently published in a volume, which is an interesting record of our position as a mission at that period of its history.

The Conference was followed by meetings of our Committee, which lasted several days, and in which all the details of every department of our work were carefully considered, and each was put on a sound basis.

Soon after all these meetings I was obliged to consider seriously the question of our new house at Antôby. I found that having built the walls and put in the flooring, rafters and the roof timbers, my friend the pastor seemed to have come to the end of his resources and was doing nothing more. It was very important that we should get into the house before May, and I saw that unless I took it in hand myself we had little prospect of occupying it. The L.M.S. did not then spend four or five hundred pounds in building residences at mission stations in Madagascar—there was some idea, I think, that Ambôhimànga would not be a permanent station, although it has remained so for fifty-three years—and they allowed me nothing for my house, so I had to advance all the rest of the money needed, between one and two hundred pounds, out of my own pocket, and trust to getting it out of the rent allowed us, or our successors.

So I told my people that for several weeks I must stop almost all week-day classes, only preaching on the Sundays. I engaged a Malagasy helper to go to the markets and buy timber; I obtained the services of two young carpenters, just married, to come to us from Antanànarìvo, and who were to live on the spot and prepare flooring, doors and windows, and other woodwork. Plastering of walls and ceilings had still to be done; I purchased locks and bolts and other necessary iron fittings from the Capital; I set the fire-grates and built the arches over them myself; and for two months I was at the house almost all day seeing after the work. I put on many of the locks and fastenings, and glazed some of the windows; and by dint of personally working and pushing on my native helpers, we managed to make the house habitable—although by no means finished, and one or two floors not yet done—by the last week or two of April, and then removed our property into it and took possession. It was a great comfort to get into a good dwelling, with space to move about in, fair-sized rooms and several of them, and boarded floors instead of damp earth. We had also a little ground round the house for a garden, although much smaller than that around the present missionary residence.

Not many days after we entered the house our baby girl, Mary Amelia, was born (May 5th), both mother and child by God's goodness doing well, although she was born before either doctor or nurse appeared. Like her brother, the little "May" (her usual name) brought additional brightness into our home; and for all she has been to us and to others all her life, we have abundant reason to praise and bless our Heavenly Father.

Soon after removing to Antòby Dr. Mullens asked me to accompany him and Mr. Pillans on a trip to the Antsihànaka province, the chief town of which, Ambàtondrazàka, is about a hundred miles (as the crow flies) from Antanànarìvo, although of course much further by the only available paths. I had to act as interpreter and manager for our friends, and I looked forward with much pleasure to seeing a new part of the great island, which was then so little known to us; so that, as I have already remarked, every journey in a fresh direction had the charm of a voyage of discovery. We left the Capital on June 16th, and got back home on July 7th after our three week's tour.

As soon as we had got settled in our new house, we felt how necessary it was, if our work was to be carried on successfully, that we should have a school building not far from us, so that we could constantly oversee the children and superintend the instruction, as well as teach in it ourselves. But although we did not propose to ask the people for a farthing to help build a school-house, or even to give us ground for the purpose, we found great difficulty thrown in our way, chiefly through the opposition of the Governor. After some time we secured a piece of ground very near the eastern gate of Ambòhimànga, but although I paid a good sum to the owner as ground-rent for several years—we foreigners could not then *purchase* land in Madagascar—there was so much hindrance thrown in our way that we could not proceed to build, and the ground had to be abandoned. I then made formal application to the Governor and to the chief people to help us to procure a small plot of ground, to benefit their children, and entirely at our own expense.[1]

After a good deal of shuffling, they replied that it was not their business, and that I had better apply to the Prime Minister at the Capital. I went therefore to see him, Messrs. W. E. and G. Cousins accompanying me to assist me; but, to our astonishment, *he* also professed that it was not *his* business, but that of the chief people of Ambòhimànga! I told him that they had referred me to him, but he would not give me any clear answer, and when I proposed to my brethren that we should ask for a simple "Yes" or "No," they thought I should only anger him, and that I had better leave it. So our interview gave me no help at all.

But although baffled in this way and sent from pillar to post, I determined not to be beaten, and after a little time I induced our pastor Rainikòlo, who *began* to build our house, to agree to rent us a piece of ground adjoining the house ground, by promising to pay him twenty years' rent *in advance*; and so at length I began to build. Rakòtovaò, who had bought for me the wood for our house and had assisted me to finish it, was engaged to act as foreman, and to procure timber for the school-house, and the erection of it proceeded rapidly. I planned it to consist of one large room, 66 feet long by 22 feet wide, with a good-sized class-room at one end, and so arranged as to allow another room to be subsequently made over it by putting in a floor. Just before the end of 1894 it was completed, and we had an opening meeting, at which our friend Richardson gave an appropriate address. It was, as may be supposed, a source of great satisfaction to us to have so good and convenient a building close to us, into which the wife especially could look in at any time, and where women's classes, Bible-classes and other meetings could be held as well as the daily school. Into it we could easily carry our harmonium to teach the children and our singers new tunes ; and I am sure our people, especially those at Amboàra, were also much pleased. It served in later years more than once as a temporary church, when they were erecting a new building.

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[1] Neither the Directors nor the Committee gave us any help in building this school-house. It was entirely built from our own money and that given by private friends. Thus we had to help ourselves in both our house and our school; at all other stations these were erected at the Society's expense.

Our Deputation left us in August and travelled to the coast by a new route, that is by palanquin, canoe and Arab dhow, to the north-west port of Mojangà, from which place they obtained passages to England, *via* Aden, by steamers of the British-India Company. This plan was adopted by several others, including ourselves, during the following few years, and proved a pleasant and quick way of reaching the homeland.

In the early part of 1875 I began to take part in editing and writing for a *Malagasy Bible Dictionary.* On this work I expended a great deal of time and careful study, as it eventually fell to me to carry it to completion ; but I reserve a fuller notice of this book for a later chapter.

I should, however, have noticed in connection with the visit of the Deputation, that some time before they left us the Memorial Church at Ampàmarìnana was opened for worship ; and it was a fortunate circumstance that it was finished so as to be dedicated on the exact day of the year on which, twenty-five years previously, the events happened which the church was designed to commemorate. It was on March 25, 1849, that fourteen brave men and women were hurled over the precipice just below the church, and four others were burned alive at Fàravòhitra ; and it was on March 25, 1874, that the Ampàmarìnana church was opened.

One of the sermons at the morning service was preached by Dr. Mullens, of course in English, and translated by Mr. George Cousins. The Doctor had a lively imagination and a picturesque style, and one of his flowery sentences was too much for the translator, and Cousins had to say: "*Poetry izàny ka tsy azo adika*" ("That's poetry and untranslatable"!) to our no small amusement.

In addition to this flowery style of speaking, Dr. Mullens, as already mentioned, had much skill and insight as a topographer. We had a striking illustration of both these accomplishments of his in a speech he made at one of the numerous committee meetings we held after the Conference. He spoke for a quarter of an hour, and in those few minutes he gave us a masterly and most picturesque and also accurate account of the topography of Imèrina, giving us all the details of hills and mountains, and plains and woods and villages, etc., in a way which astonished us all. One of my brethren remarked to me at its close: "I never saw all these things, at any rate in the light Dr. Mullens has shown them." It was a case, I think, of "eyes and no eyes"; for the Doctor saw a glory and a beauty in the bare hills and downs of Imèrina, and in the variety of grasses which clothes them, in which most of us, who had seen them for years, could only see the uninteresting and the commonplace.

In July 1875 we had an addition to our mission staff in the arrival of the Rev. J. T. Wesley and his wife and the Rev. C. T. Price and his wife. The former of these were appointed by the Directors to the Antsihànaka mission, but the Board thought it would be well for them to be in a station with one of the country missionaries for a year or so, that they might gain acquaintance with practical work, as well as with the language, before proceeding to their station. So we were asked to receive Mr. and Mrs. Wesley at Ambòhimànga, and to do all we could to initiate them into mission work. Accordingly I set off to meet our friends, and went down the country to somewhere near the centre of the lower forest before I came up with them. I found that from their unacquaintance with Madagascar travelling, and their inability to speak to their bearers, they had not had much comfort on the way in the matter of meals and commissariat. However, I did my best to give them better fare as I travelled back with them, and then brought Mr. and Mrs. Wesley to Ambòhimànga, where they stayed with us for a few days until we could find a house for them. This we secured to the north of the town, and so we were no longer alone in our station.

Mr. Wesley had been Congregational minister for a year or two at York Street Chapel, Dublin, and was a man of very gentle and beautiful spirit. His wife was a bright and clever young Irish lady and had a good deal of fun in her. We did all we could to help them in various ways, giving them assistance in the language and showing them our work, etc. We generally spent the Sunday evenings at our house and their's alternately, and Mr. Wesley used to read Farrar's *Life of Christ* aloud to us, after we had had some English hymns. Some of the concluding chapters of that book will always be associated in my mind with his voice on those Sunday evenings. But although Mr. Wesley was earnestly desirous to do mission work, and to proceed to the station to which he had been appointed, he was evidently not strong in constitution, for he had an attack of fever, to which he soon succumbed, and his earthly course terminated within five months after his arrival in the country. Mrs. Wesley after a few months returned to her home in Dublin.

Here I may just notice a literary venture of some importance which occupied some of my time towards the end of 1875, viz. the commencement of *The Antanànarìvo Annual and Madagascar Magazine.* This proved to be one of the most noteworthy of my literary undertakings ; but I reserve a fuller notice of it for a subsequent chapter.

In the early part of 1876 we spent a month or so again at Andràngalòaka, in Dr. Davidson's house, enjoying as always the quiet rest and the beauty of the forest ; and during this visit we had the unique experience of a cyclone, and a very alarming one it was. It is well known that the Indian Ocean is the region of these destructive storms, and that Mauritius and Rèunion lie in their track and often suffer much in consequence, while they more rarely reach the eastern shore of Madagascar. But it was almost an unknown occurrence that they should come up into the interior, yet that was the case at the time I am speaking of. It was on a Sunday evening, February 20th, and the sun set with a crimson radiance that covered the whole sky in a remarkable manner. We settled down after our evening meal for a little reading aloud ; but soon we became conscious that the wind had risen and was blowing unusually hard ; and the roar increased so that we could not hear what was read. We found that its violence increased, and at length we perceived that it was gradually changing its direction, and then I felt sure that we were in the track of a cyclone. We went to bed, but not to sleep, for the rain poured in from the roof, and the howling of the wind made sleep impossible.

We lay trembling in our beds, fearing every now and then, as a more violent burst shook the house, that it would be blown down over us, and we buried in its ruins. I never felt more alarmed in any storm at sea than I did that night ; and had not the house been strengthened with burnt-brick chimney-stacks in the three gables, it would, I feel sure, have been destroyed. Early in the night the glass-door in the sitting-room opening on to the upper verandah was blown open, and I had the utmost difficulty in closing it again, the rain beating right across upon the opposite wall. Soon afterwards the zinc covering of the verandah was torn off, rolled up and carried away some distance with a fearful clatter; and soon after dawn—and how long that dawn seemed in coming !—the outer roof of the house, which was of grass fixed over the tiled roof, was seized bodily by the wind and carried off altogether with its timbers with a great crash, damaging the outbuildings, so that we thought the house itself was all going. But towards 9 a.m. the wind gradually subsided, after having blown from about three-quarters of the circle of the compass. It was one of the most alarming circumstances in our lives.

A day or two afterwards we tried to take one of our usual walks through the woods, but found that most of the paths were blocked up by fallen trees and branches. In the valleys scores of tall trees had been torn up by the roots, with great masses of earth clinging to them, while in other places numbers of trees had been broken off short, snapped as if they had been mere twigs ; and in the prostrate branches were a great many arboreal creatures—chameleons, lizards, serpents and tree-frogs—dashed down from their homes. It was all striking evidence of the force with which the fierce wind had roared, especially in the valleys, and had laid low everything in its path. Scores of country chapels as well as native houses were unroofed and greatly damaged by this storm; and our own house at Ambòhimànga was much injured, ceilings and other plaster work being changed in a mass of mud on the floors.

During these six years at Ambòhimànga, although I have not in this chapter said much about our daily mission work, it was regularly carried on in the way of preaching, preachers' classes, country Bible-classes, singing lessons, etc., while my wife taught the school children and the women, first in a temporary rush structure in our compound, and then in our new school-house. When the Queen came on her yearly visits to Ambòhimànga, she used to send down a number of girls connected with her family and her court to learn with my wife, and at these times a girl came with the others who afterwards succeeded to the throne as Rànavàlona III. When living, as she generally did, in Antanànarìvo, she was for some time a pupil in our L.M.S. Girls' Central School, and was under the gracious influence and teaching of Miss Bliss, of our Society. And to such influence we may probably ascribe much of that excellence of character and action which always marked the life and reign of the last Malagasy sovereign.

It was our custom at these annual visits of Queen Rànavàlona II to Ambòhimànga, as we could not go up into the town to pay our respects to her Majesty, to go out and meet her on the road at a little distance from the eastern gate, and there she would have her palanquin stopped, while I made a short speech in the native fashion, with the usual compliments, and then presented a dollar as our mark of respect. To this she would reply with a few words of thanks. When our little Willie was two or three years old, we took him with us on one of these occasions, and I gave him the dollar to present to the Queen, thinking she would be pleased to receive it from the child. But to my confusion and dismay he clutched it firmly in his hand and would not give it up! and I had some difficulty in getting it from him and handing it myself to the Queen. She was much amused at the incident, but we were afraid we had committed some terrible breach of etiquette.

In the early part of 1876 I was invited by the Committee of the Friends' Foreign Missionary Association to accompany Mr. Louis Street, a member of that mission in Antanànarìvo, on a journey to some of the southern regions of Madagascar; and as this would be—to me—over perfectly new portions of the island, and as the journey would be exploratory as well as missionary in character, I gladly consented, and had no difficulty in procuring leave from my own committee. Mr. and Mrs. Street were warm friends of ours, and I felt sure that Mr. Street's companionship would be very pleasant. We set off on this journey on May 23rd and were away from our homes for about eleven weeks, getting back to the Capital on August 5th. We took a tent with us, together with the necessary clothes, bedding, etc., and European stores of provisions for several weeks, and I had with me my theodolite, as I hoped to add something to a more accurate knowledge of this then very little known country, and to map out our route, while we hoped also to make it a distinctively missionary journey, and to find out how the Gospel might be more widely made known to some of the still heathen tribes of the Malagasy.

A full account of this journey, under the title of *South-east Madagascar*, forming a booklet of 80 pages, was published at Antanànarìvo soon after our return; and with it I gave a sketch-map of those portions of our travels which had not been previously explored, together with vocabularies of provincial words collected on the route, and itineraries, with other information. The scientific aspects of our journey are given with other details in one of the chapters of my book entitled, *A Naturalist in Madagascar*, while its religious results I reserve for separate notice in these pages.

Soon after our return home from our journey to the south-east, I had a pressing request from the Directors that I would leave Ambòhimànga and remove to Antanànarìvo to take part in the work of the College as one of its tutors. Neither my wife or I wished for this change, for although, as I have already mentioned, we had many annoyances and difficulties in the work at Ambòhimànga, arising from the hostility of the Governor and the interruptions from royal visits every year, we both liked and preferred country service and felt no desire to be missionaries in the Capital. The same proposal had been made to us more than once before by the Imèrina Committee, and had been declined, but as this wish was now backed up by the Directors, we decided that we must consent to do as they asked us, and take the new position, which included also the charge, together with Mr. Toy, the senior tutor, of the congregation at the Memorial Church at Fàravòhitra and of its country district. We accordingly prepared to remove to Antanànarìvo, and of course had to look out for a house in town; our fellow-travellers to Madagascar in 1870, Mr. and Mrs. Wills, were to succeed us at Ambòhimànga.

On Sundays, October 8 and 15 (1876), I preached farewell sermons and addresses to the four mother churches at our station, and during the week following the latter date, we removed into the Capital with our two children and our household goods, and entered our new residence.

But as this removal to Antanànarìvo concluded the chapter of my life which was spent as a country missionary, it may also close the present chapter of this book.

CHAPTER VI

THIRTY YEARS' WORK AS COLLEGE PRINCIPAL AND TUTOR

In all its principal fields of labour the London Missionary Society, in common with other societies, has felt the imperative need of an educated and enlightened native ministry, if heathen countries are to be effectually evangelized. For while pioneering work must be begun by European and American missionaries, and for many years also needs to be guided and superintended by them, the eventual triumph of the Gospel in the world must be accomplished by Chinese and Hindus and Africans and other peoples for their own countrymen.

And since the progress of Christianity in Madagascar has been largely due to the work of Malagasy evangelists and teachers, it is fitting that the institution where many hundreds of them have been trained and prepared for their work should be described in a brief sketch of its commencement and subsequent history. And to myself the subject is of special interest, since I had the privilege, and also the grave responsibility, of acting for twenty-five years as its Principal, and for five and a half years afterwards as a tutor. So that for a large proportion of my half-century of missionary service my chief time and strength were given to collegiate work, while for twenty-five years my dear wife worked indefatigably to instruct and train the wives of our students.

The L.M.S. College in Antanànarìvo was commenced in the year 1869, so that it has now been working for fifty-four years. After the re-occupation of Madagascar in 1862 by Christian teachers, and when the missionaries had acquired the language and a fair knowledge of the condition of the native congregations, it became evident that there was urgent need for the instruction of those who were their pastors and preachers, and for preparing others who would in the future fill such positions. There were then very few books for them to use, and most of them had nothing to help them in the study of the Scriptures and in preaching except the Bible, and many had only a New Testament. As already mentioned, almost every missionary in the Capital began classes for the instruction of those who tried to preach and to guide and instruct the congregations. It should be remembered that until July 1870 there were no country stations away from Antanànarìvo; up to that date all the missionaries were stationed in the Capital. These classes were arranged to be held on different days of the week, and thus many young men eager for knowledge would attend them all, learning in turn from the six or seven missionaries in Antanànarìvo, and so obtaining a considerable amount of Scripture teaching.

But it soon became evident that more systematic and fuller instruction was desirable if an intelligent native ministry was to be raised up; and therefore in the year 1868 it was decided that a Theological Seminary should be attempted, and that two of the missionaries should be asked to devote a large part of their time and energies to the teaching of such an institution. (We did not use the word "college" at first; it appeared too ambitious; but somehow or other the word was laid hold of by the Malagasy, and it was eventually adopted. Curiously enough, the students also are known by the people generally as *kolèjy*, in the same way as children at school are spoken of as *sekòly*.[1])

Mr. Toy and Mr. G. Cousins accordingly commenced daily classes in order to test the possibility of carrying on such work, and the willingness of the preachers to learn regularly; and a temporary wooden building was erected on the north-east side of the central triangular space called Andohàlo for the accommodation of the students. After a few weeks' trial, it was evident that there were many intelligent young men in the Capital and its neighbourhood who were anxious to avail themselves of the advantages offered, and were also willing to give the necessary time, and devote their lives to the service of the churches. Between thirty and forty young men presented themselves as candidates, and after passing an entrance examination, thirty of them were accepted as the first students, and the College was formally commenced in April 1869.

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[1] The letter c is not in use in Malagasy writing; and the accent, it will be seen, is thrown forward one syllable.

It had been intended to hold the opening meeting in the church at Avàratr' Andohàlo, but when the Queen, Rànavàlona II, heard of the proposed service, her Majesty requested that it might be held in her presence, so the opening meeting took place in the new palace called "Manàmpisòa." Mr. Briggs delivered an impressive address to the students; the Prime Minister added a few words of encouragement to them; and the Queen herself concluded the meeting by thanking the missionaries and the newly-accepted men.

Among the students then received were several who bore names which for long afterwards were well known and greatly honoured as preachers and pastors, and who greatly aided in the building up of the Malagasy churches. Some of them were eminently gifted as preachers, and their services were always greatly appreciated.

Mr. Toy and Mr. G. Cousins definitely accepted the position of English tutors, but they also had the help of a young Malagasy who had been educated in England, and afterwards of my valued friend, Radaniéla, and of other Malagasy assistants.

From the beginning the object of the College was twofold: first, to prepare native pastors for their work; and secondly, to train evangelists or assistant missionaries; but the first of these aims, owing to various difficulties which it was impossible to overcome, the chief of these being that the native churches were not for a long time afterwards prepared to give adequate support to a trained ministry, was only partially accomplished. The chief work of the College, therefore, for many years, was the training of evangelists. This work was, however, a quite indispensable one in the condition of the Malagasy congregations at that time, and indeed up to a very recent period; and such men are still needed in the outlying and less enlightened portions of every missionary district.

It is difficult to overestimate the value of the work done for the College for the first few years of its existence by Mr. Toy and Mr. G. Cousins. When they began to teach, there were no text-books in the native language, and therefore for a long time it was a heavy strain upon them to prepare night after night, for four days every week of the session, three or four lectures to be given to their students on the following morning. These were taken down by the men in note-books, and were afterwards printed as text-books for the use of the students in subsequent years; and I often observed with pleasure, in my visits to distant portions of my Anàlakèly district, the row of note-books, with the tutors' lectures neatly written out, on the shelves of the evangelists who had been college students.

But the strain proved too much for Mr. Toy, whose head became seriously affected, so that he had to stop teaching more than once before he was finally obliged to give it up altogether and leave for England. He did not, however, reach his native land, but died at sea on the voyage home in the year 1880. Mr. G. Cousins stood the exertion better and continued his duties until he at length left for England in 1883, having thus served the College for about fourteen years in Madagascar, and continuing his interest in its prosperity all the time he acted as Editorial Secretary and then as Joint Foreign Secretary of the L.M.S. Both these brethren will be long remembered, not only as the first tutors and founders of the College, but also for the valuable books they prepared, which were used for many years, and some of which will probably be still used in the classes. A list of these given in the footnote will show what we owe to their indefatigable labours.[1]

During intervals caused by the tutors' absences on furlough, several missionaries took their places temporarily; and after Mr. Toy's death the Rev. T. Capsey, B.A., was sent to fill his place; while on Mr. G. Cousins's retirement in 1883, I was appointed as the senior tutor. I had been asked to join the professional staff six or seven years before that time, but as I was away from Madagascar for six years, I did but little teaching at that earlier date. After Mr. Capsey's death, or rather, mysterious disappearance, in 1886, the Rev. A. W. Wilson was sent by the Directors to fill his place; and on his retirement from the College to take up work in the Antsihànaka mission in 1892, my dear friend, Rev. Jas. Sharman, B.A., B.D., came out with us in that year to be my colleague, and there we continued in very happy co-operation until the requisition of the College building for a Court of Justice by General Gallieni in 1897. This obliged us to separate our forces for several years, Mr. Sharman taking the "secular" students to temporary quarters in the Ampàmarìnana Memorial Church and schoolhouse, where it soon developed very largely, ultimately becoming the fine Boys' High School at Ambàtonakànga, with 600 pupils. I, on the other hand, took the ministerial students, and we did as well as we could for two or three years in the vestry and under the gallery of the Fàravòhitra Memorial Church. My good friend the Rev. Richard Baron took charge of the College during my absence on furlough in 1899–1901, besides helping us at other times in giving lectures, as also did many other missionary brethren.

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[1] Mr. Toy wrote: an *Astronomy*, a *Physical Geography*, *Soteriology*, *Theology of the New Testament*, *The Wisdom of God seen in His Works*, and a *Logic*. Mr. G. Cousins wrote: a *Malagasy Grammar*, *The Bible and How we Obtained it*, *The Preacher's Friend*, *Apostolic Church History*, a *Life of Christ*, *Christian Dogmatics*, *Commentary on the Ep. to the Galatians*, *Hermeneutics*, an *English Reading-book*, *English Lessons*, and some smaller books.

All these books were of course in the Malagasy language.

I must mention here that from the first the English tutors have had the very valuable assistance of several native brethren, especially that of my valued friend, Pastor Radanièla, who was first a student and then became a tutor, and who was connected with the College for nearly thirty years. Several others, some of them pastors, have been and are still helping the Principal; and the College owes very much to the faithful and efficient services of the Malagasy tutors, who have always worked most harmoniously with the English professors.

Something must be said about *the buildings* the College has successively occupied. After leaving Andohàlo in 1875, temporary premises for teaching the classes were put up in the lower terrace of the ground in the Fàravòhitra quarter of the Capital, where eventually the large and prominent structure was erected which was our College and tutors' residence for sixteen years. This building was opened with much *éclat* on January 18, 1881, the Prime Minister being present and taking part in the proceedings; and it was with great pleasure and thankfulness that the tutors and students took possession of the commodious premises provided for them. With the additional accommodation of a building specially designed for the purpose, came the opportunity for introducing many little reforms and a more thorough discipline. When old students came to see the new College, they almost invariably broke out into some exclamation of regret that they had belonged to less privileged times; and some even went the length of asking to be allowed to come back and study again!

The new structure comprised not only several large class-rooms, library, museum, committee-room, laboratory, etc., but also a fine lecture hall, seated amphitheatre fashion, which would seat from 400 to 500 people. At each end of the building was a good residence for each of the two tutors, where my colleagues and we also found comfortable homes for several years. The building was one of the most prominent and conspicuous structures to be seen on the eastern side of the city ridge.

Here, in addition to the daily teaching in the class-rooms, we used for several years to give in the Lecture Hall courses of popular lectures, often illustrated by experiments, as well as by drawings and diagrams, and we also had occasional concerts. These were given on Saturday afternoons, and we tried to distribute the tickets of admission so as to secure the attendance of the most intelligent young people of our schools and churches. These tickets were much sought after, and more than once I found that some had been so cleverly imitated that they were not detected in the crowd while people were being admitted. These lectures covered a very wide range of subjects. We always commenced with a hymn and a brief prayer, and I recall that one lecture was on "Lime," in which Mr. Wills gave us an interesting account of the way in which that mineral had helped to build up the rocks of the earth in coral reefs, chalk, etc. With a comical look, the chairman asked me just before we commenced, "My dear fellow, what's the nearest hymn we have to 'Lime'?"

Dr. Standing, of the Friends' Mission, gave us several instructive lectures on such subjects as "Colour" and "Servants without Life," that is, water, wind and steam used to supply power, each having a working model to show their application, and a couple of little steam engines puffing away on the lecture table. He also gave one on "Optical Illusions," for a French conjurer had been astonishing the Malagasy by marvellous feats of legerdemain, which many of the people ascribed to supernatural power. Dr. Standing showed them how such tricks were effected; but when they saw his head apparently cut off on a dish and surrounded by a gory handkerchief, several of the women rushed in terror out of the building! However, I think we may justly claim to have done a good deal in these lectures for sixteen years to enlighten and interest, as well as to amuse, the most intelligent portion of the population of the capital. And so, from 1881 to 1896, we carried on our teaching until a few months after the French conquest in September 1895.

Then came a heavy blow to our work and to our prestige as a Society. For we were informed by the Governor-General that our building was indispensable for the purposes of government, and that he must take possession of it! There was no resisting this: the country was under martial law, and we could not appeal to our own Government for help; and it was a dark day for us when we had to relinquish our fine premises and seek another home for our work, and also new residences for Mr. and Mrs. Sharman and for ourselves. Our two largest class-rooms, joined into one, became "The Court of First Instance," and our Lecture Hall "The Supreme Court." The building was no doubt of great service to the French authorities; but it is also certain that it was too fine and prominent a structure to remain in English hands, for there was then very little of the friendship between the two countries which afterwards became known as the *Entente cordiale.*

As already mentioned, we found temporary accommodation for our work; for if, as we suspected at the time, General Gallieni, before he came to understand us better, really expected that both our High School and our College would be broken up by the loss of our building, that expectation was not realized; we held on to both of them, and both eventually became quite as prosperous as before. After the visit of Messrs. Wardlaw Thompson and Evan Spicer in 1897, we were empowered to erect new premises for both School and College; and by purchasing a small piece of land adjoining that around the Fàravòhitra Memorial Church, we secured a site sufficiently large for our purpose. During several months in the year 1898 I superintended the erection of a modest little college building which I had designed, and in which I took much pride and pains in adapting to our requirements; it included no tutors' residences, but with its equipment of books, maps and diagrams, pictures, telescopes and microscopes, etc., was very well suited for our wants. It comprised two good class-rooms on the ground floor, a little lecture hall above, which, with the third class-room at one end, would accommodate a hundred and twenty people, and was very useful for large classes for pastors, preachers and others, as well as for our daily prayers and various meetings. I procured a series of beautiful large tinted and coloured lithographs of the great buildings of the world, from the Pyramids down to the Paris Louvre, as well as some of the most remarkable scenes of nature, such as a tropical forest, the Great Cañon of Colorado, etc., and these helped to brighten the walls of our new building. Here I had more than seven years of very happy work; in my class-room, which also served as our District Committee-room, I had our mission and college libraries all around me, most conveniently arranged close at hand for immediate and ready reference while teaching my students. Easily got at also were microscope and slides for use when teaching zoology or botany, or rock and mineral specimens when teaching geology, and so on; what more could a tutor desire to carry on successfully his work, as far as such aids were concerned?

Before speaking of the later development of the College, and its removal once more to another building, I must speak of *the men* we have prepared for Christian work and sent forth from the College, and about what they have done for the furtherance of the kingdom of God in Madagascar.

From the commencement of the work in 1869 up to the year 1909, forty years, no fewer than seven hundred men were accepted as students. Of these, about one hundred in earlier years (1878–1895) were what we termed "seculars," that is, young men of good position who did not propose to become evangelists or pastors, but who desired further education beyond any that was then available in the high schools of the different missions (the native Government did hardly anything in supporting schools). Many of these were afterwards appointed as governors, deputy-governors, judges and to other official posts in the Malagasy Government. Many of these "secular students" were known to have carried into public life a much higher standard of uprightness and honourable conduct than was common with native officials, and so brought credit to the Christianity they professed. (One of our students was for some time the Minister of Education, that is, Chief Examiner of Schools; and another was for several years Minister for Foreign Affairs.) In fact, for seventeen or eighteen years one purpose of the College was to give an advanced and Christian education to intelligent youths of seventeen years and upwards, and so to fit them for public and business life.

But from the very first, as already stated, the chief work of the College has been the training of young men to be evangelists or missionary assistants, while a smaller proportion of them have in the earlier, and again in later years, become settled pastors. And with many imperfections, of which we who have carried on the teaching are more conscious than anyone else can be, I can say confidently that a great work has been effected by the College during the many years of its existence. It is not too much to say that the progress the Gospel has made in enlightening the central provinces of Madagascar, as well as the success of mission work in other parts of the island, is greatly due to the men we have trained as evangelists.

They have not all of them been successes. We have had our failures; but I believe such are not unknown in colleges at home in England. We have had our Demases, who have used the College as a stepping-stone to worldly position, and have turned aside for the love of gain. We have had some who have broken down morally and been overcome by temptation, making shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience; but we have also had, thank God, a large proportion of men who have been like Titus and

Timothy and Tychicus, like Epaphras and Epaphroditus and others in apostolic times, of whom *we* can also say that they have been " fellow-workers and faithful ministers and beloved brethren," " men who have been a comfort to us." Many of these six hundred have " endured hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." During the persecution carried on for many months by the Jesuits, and the cruelties perpetrated by the heathen rebels, the evangelists had to bear the brunt of the battle. Some were imprisoned on account of their fidelity ; others witnessed a good confession for nearly a year as prisoners in the rebel camps ; several had their houses and property destroyed, including their beloved books, and narrowly escaped with their lives.

During a long journey my wife and I took in 1887 to the southern provinces, we came almost every day, both at our midday halt or when stopping for the night, to villages where evangelists were stationed ; most of them had been our own students, and their wives had been taught by my wife and her colleague. And it was delightful to us to see how they were carrying out our teaching and training in their congregations, their schools and their classes, and spreading influence for good around them ; so that we felt we were indirectly instructing hundreds of people, whose faces we should never see, through the men and women we had taught. We thanked God and took courage as we went on our way. And on other journeys in other directions I have found similar reasons for thankfulness for those who had been our students.

A very important part of the work done by the College has been the instruction given for many years past to *the students' wives.* This has been very necessary, for it has frequently happened that while the *men* received as students have usually been the brightest and most intelligent in their church and village, they have often had very ignorant and stupid girls as their *wives.* There is very little of love-making or courtship among the Malagasy ; marriages are generally arranged by the parents or other relations of the young people, and they marry within the clan or tribe, so as to keep property, especially land, together ; and it not infrequently happens that husband and wife have hardly seen each other before they are united. So it has been the task, often a very difficult one, for the tutors' wives to teach and train these dull girls and try to prepare them to become fitting helpmeets for their husbands. And it has been wonderful and delightful to see in many cases what a change has been produced after three or four years, by the instruction given and by the personal daily influence of Christian ladies. So that dull stupid girls, often unable even to read when they came up from the country, have gradually brightened, and had their minds enlarged and their hearts touched, and so have become earnest workers with their husbands.

For the first term of our service at the College, of seven years, this work was done almost entirely by my wife; but on returning to Madagascar in 1892 we had the happiness of having Mr. and Mrs. Sharman come out with us and become our colleagues. Mrs. Sharman, who was a trained teacher, threw herself heartily into the work of teaching the students' wives, and so the two ladies worked most happily together for several years until our furlough in England in 1908.

Among other good work formerly done by the students was preaching in the great open-air markets which are held on different days at various places within a few miles of the Capital. The tutors, especially my brother Sharman, were accustomed to take several of the men to these gatherings of the people; and there, in the midst of buying and selling and getting gain, they tried to point to the "pearl of great price," and to urge upon their hearers to seek earnestly the true riches and to accept Christ as their Saviour. French law does not allow of such outdoor services, but they have been continued to a certain degree in the market services held every Friday in our Anàlakèly church, close to the great weekly market held every Friday, to which thousands of people come from the country all round, as well as from the city itself.

A few words must be said about our *College Curriculum.* And in reply to such a question as "What do you teach your students?" it may be answered that we try, first and foremost, to give them an intelligent knowledge of the Scriptures, the origin and purpose of the different books of the Bible, and the progressive character of the revelation of God's will contained in them. So we make full use of the numerous exegetical commentaries we already have on all the books of the New Testament, and on several of the Old Testament, and of the Introductions to these, and especially the Life of Christ. We try to teach them how we got the Bible in its present form, and its transmission by manuscripts and versions, etc. Theology, of course, in its various branches, takes a prominent place, and also Church History, from apostolic down to modern times, including thorough grounding on the principles of Protestantism. Church officers and institutions (sacraments, etc.) are carefully studied, and also Liturgics in the form of the conduct of public worship. Hermeneutics and especially Homiletics, not only in the study of the text-books, but particularly in the weekly preaching class for the preparation and delivery of sermons before their companions and the tutors; this we consider one of the most valuable and important parts of our studies. These are criticized by the students and then summed up by the tutor, and most interesting and suggestive are the remarks constantly made.

Among other subjects may be mentioned Logic, to form habits of clear and accurate thinking; the Geography of the Holy Land; Non-christian Religions (Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism and Mohammedanism); and Natural Science. We have always tried to show our men how God has a revelation to us not only in His Word, but also in His wonderful works; and so some scientific subject is taught every term, using the text-books we have on astronomy, botany, zoology, chemistry, geology and physical geography, etc., as the basis of our teaching. In all such work we have the assistance of complete sets of diagrams on the different subjects, as well as telescopes and microscopes, and cabinets of minerals and fossils given by generous friends to the College. Most of these helps we owed to the exertions of Mr. George Cousins when at home on furlough. Of later years Mrs. Sharman and other ladies have given instruction to the students and their wives on the best way of Sunday school teaching according to modern methods, and by means of a model class of children, and making the students teach such a class before their teacher. The Sol-fa system of singing always forms one of our subjects.

During the earlier period of the College work (1870–1895) our students in their last year of study used to attend two or three times every week classes at our Mission Hospital. Here the medical missionaries gave them instruction in simple surgery, "first-aid" work, and the use of proper medicine for the most common complaints of the Malagasy. This knowledge was often a very important help to the students in their work, especially in distant places where no regular medical help could be obtained. Life was often saved and much suffering alleviated by what the evangelist was able to do, and peoples' hearts were opened for him to give spiritual help as well as physical assistance. Since the French occupation, however, all such help by men not having a French diploma has been strictly prohibited.

An institution of a very useful and pleasant character in connection with the College was first suggested by our good colleagues, and has been carried on with great appreciation and success up to the present time, viz. a *réunion* of our present and past students and their wives, which is held on one of the mornings of the week during which our Six-monthly Meetings (or Congregational Union) are held in the Capital. In these helpful gatherings, which are held in our Lecture Hall, the evangelists and their wives find much pleasure in meeting old friends and former fellow-students, as well as their former tutors. An address is always given by a European missionary, or a Malagasy pastor, on some timely subject; full discussion impresses its importance on those who thus meet together; and advice is often asked upon difficult points connected with the evangelists' work. An *esprit de corps* is thus kept up among our former and the present *alumni*; and the young recruits make closer acquaintance with the veterans who have already fought the Lord's battles against ignorance and sin, and thus get help and stimulus in the work which lies before them.

Our annual College meeting is always looked forward to with great interest. An address by the chairman of committee, or a missionary of another society, is one of its features, when earnest and faithful counsel and advice is given to the students—varying in number from half a dozen to a dozen—leaving us on the completion of their four years' course of study. The next item is the reading by an outgoing student of an Essay which had been chosen as the best of those written by the men of that year. This was on a subject given some time previously by the tutors, and was generally on some Scriptural topic, or occasionally one of more general or national importance. These essays are often extremely good and are frequently afterwards printed in full in one of the mission periodicals. Then comes the reading of the list of marks obtained in the examinations, and then the totals gained by each man, beginning with the lowest, the excitement increasing as the figures go up name by name, until it reaches nearly or quite the maximum of possible marks. The giving of certificates and prizes follows, the latter partly in money and partly in books, one of which for several years was a copy of our Malagasy *Bible Dictionary.* The wives of the students then receive their prizes from the ladies who had taught them. A portrait group of the outgoing men and their wives and of the tutors is always taken afterwards. For many years also a dinner to them has followed in the afternoon or evening, when each one would have to speak for a few minutes; and there is generally a social evening in the Principal's house, with singing and games, etc., till at length praise and prayer concludes the day and with it their life at College.

It may be further asked, Where and how do the students live during their College course? It must be remembered that although very young, about half or perhaps more of their number are married before entering; and for several years those received had to make arrangements for themselves, either by living with relatives or friends in the Capital, or by hiring a cottage for the time. The vast majority of our students are not well-to-do people, and they have always received a small monthly allowance from the Committee. As time went on, we began to receive students from the Bétsiléo province and other distant places, who had no relatives or acquaintances in Imèrina, and then it became increasingly needful to make some provision for their house accommodation. By the kindness of the late Mrs. Mellor, of Halifax, who had been for three or four years a self-supporting missionary in Madagascar and had always taken a deep interest in the Malagasy, we received a sum of money sufficient to build eight or ten cottages on a site belonging to the L.M.S.; and these for many years were occupied by some of our students and their families, especially those from a distance.

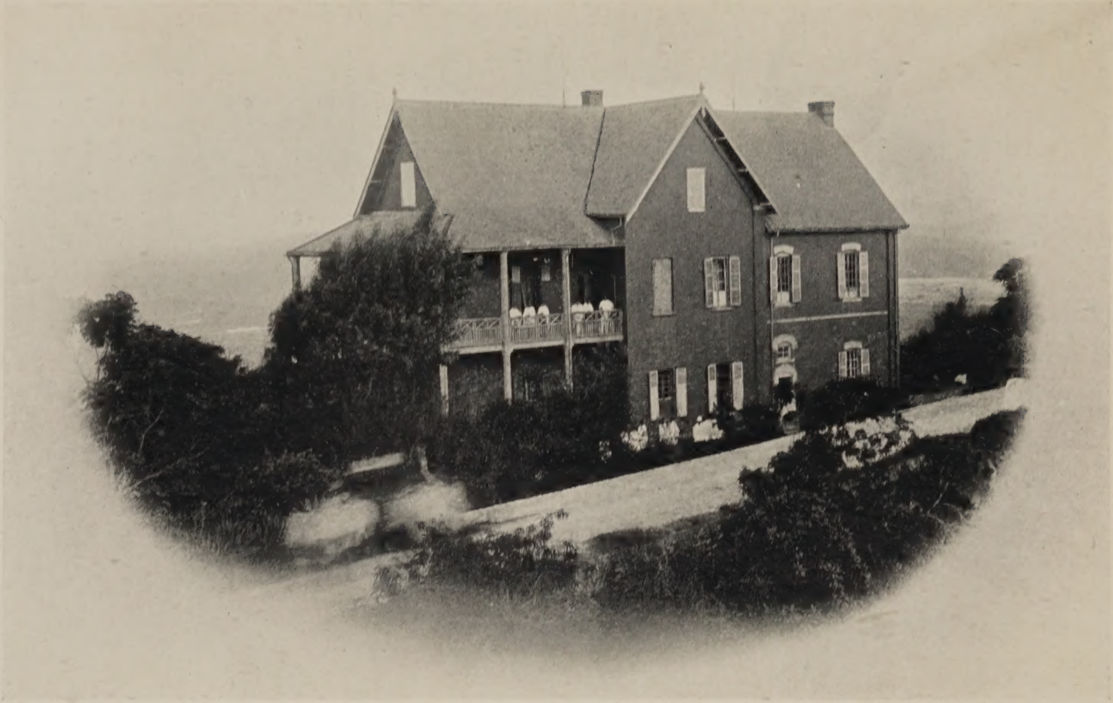
But it became increasingly evident that it would be extremely desirable to have all the students, married and unmarried, living together close to the Principal, and under his and his wife's personal supervision, so that the institution should become a Residential College. At first it was proposed to remove the College altogether away from the Capital; but, very wisely as I think, it was at length decided to place it at Ambòhipòtsy, at the southern extremity of the city ridge, and near where the second Memorial Church stands. This part of the town is quiet and retired, very high and healthy, and yet within a quarter of an hour's walk of the centre of the city. The students would thus have the great benefit of the mental stimulus and active life of Antanànarìvo, with its numerous churches, frequent meetings and lectures and other advantages, and yet have the quiet of a country residence.

The decision of the District Committee to make this very important change was come to during our furlough in England of 1908 and 1909, but we heartily approved of it as most desirable. The Committee also thought that as my wife and I were no longer young (I was in the "seventies"), it would not be right to put upon us the additional burden of responsibility and labour which the superintendence of a residential college would involve. They therefore asked me to resign the position of Principal and to accept that of "Principal Emeritus," still, however, taking as much work as I was able to do in teaching. We quite accepted the wisdom of this course, and so from the commencement of 1910 I was at the College only two days every week, my brother Sharman and his wife taking the guidance of the newly organized College.

But another important alteration was also made in its constitution at that time, for in accordance with the principle of co-operation and united work so strongly advocated at the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, the Friends' Society represented in Madagascar proposed to join us in college work and to take a certain share in its teaching and working expenses. This was accepted by the L.M.S. and so the institution became "The United Theological College (L.M.S. and F.F.M.A.)" from the beginning of 1910. Up to the present time (October 1923) this arrangement has continued in force; but it appears possible now that the Friends may withdraw and have a separate seminary of their own in the midst of their own district to the west of the Capital, where a fuller inculcation of "Friends' principles" can be given than was practicable in a united College.

The formation of a complete residential College was, however, a matter that required two or three years' time to perfect. At the requisition of our large building in 1897 by General Gallieni, Mr. and Mrs. Sharman secured a large and well-built house at Ambòhipòtsy for their residence and also for a Boys' Home; to accommodate these lads two large rooms had been added to the original house, and as the Home had to be given up, two good rooms were immediately available for College classes. An additional class-room was afterwards built, and with another room in the house we had thus one for each of the four classes, corresponding to the years of study. Land was then bought adjoining the house, and a number of two-storied cottages built on two terraces going down the steep hill-side to the east. Other land with cottages upon them was also obtained below the house; and in these different buildings the married students were lodged. For the unmarried men, a good-sized two-storied building was erected to the south, with living-room and kitchen below and dormitory above; and thus at length a little village grew up around us, and the College became truly "residential."

In all this new work it was a pleasure to me to prepare drawings, mark out the foundations and act as general adviser, while Mrs. Sharman made the contracts, paid the workmen and kept the accounts, taking immense pains that every penny should be profitably spent. I used to tell her that she was quite qualified to go into business as a contractor and builder! The expense of all this and other



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work was defrayed from money generously given by relatives and friends of Mr. and Mrs. Sharman.

For myself I may add that after another five years' work came, on March 25, 1915, the last day of my College class teaching, and I felt this to be a solemn and heart-searching time, leading me to ask if I had done all I could and ought to have done for my students during the thirty years that I had been connected with the College. And yet I think I could, as in the sight of God, say that I earnestly tried to do my best for the men; that I made it my chief work, although I had also other important duties, and threw all my energy and power into it, as far as I knew how to do so. No doubt I might have done more and done better work; may God graciously accept and bless it still, in spite of all its deficiencies and shortcomings!

By its fruits our College work must be judged; and when I remember the influence our students have had as evangelists in many parts of their native country; how they have been the chief preachers of the Gospel of salvation in the central and other provinces of the island; how they have encouraged and laboured in school work; and how scores of them were for many years the only doctors in extensive districts—when I remember all this, I am not ashamed of its results, or of my own share in it, or of the three or four hundred men I have helped to train.

May its future be still more fruitful than its past, and do a yet greater and more useful work for Madagascar and its people!

CHAPTER VII

A MISSIONARY EXPLORATORY JOURNEY TO THE SIHÀNAKA OR LAKE PEOPLE

In a previous chapter I mentioned that during my life as a country missionary I had the opportunity of making two journeys into previously almost unknown parts of Madagascar; and some of the incidents connected with one of those journeys will, I think, show certain of the "shadows" as well as the "lights" of the religious position in the great island at the time they were undertaken, viz., in "the seventies" of the last century.

The first journey, that to the Antsihànaka province, was made in June and July 1874, and lasted just three weeks; and the second one, that to the south-eastern regions, occupied nearly three months; the primary object of each journey being to see what had been already accomplished in some places by Christian teaching, and also to find out how much there still remained to be done before those regions could be pronounced to be effectively occupied for evangelization.

With regard to the first of these journeys, it may be premised that the Antsihànaka province extends for about 75 miles in a northerly and southerly direction north-east of the Capital, its southern boundary being distant from Antanànarìvo about 85 miles, while its breadth is from 30 to 40 miles east and west. It is a nearly level plain, lying between the two belts of forest which extend for several hundred miles on the eastern side of the island, but it is somewhat broken up by several lines of low hills which partly cross it in a diagonal direction, and are extremely like great railway embankments. As its name implies, it is "the country of the Sihànaka," or Lake people,[1] for it includes, besides many small sheets of water, the largest lake in Madagascar, which is not so very large after all, as it is only about 27 miles long. But this Alaotra lake is only the greatly diminished relic of a very much larger lake, which formerly occupied the whole plain and stretched north and south for between two and three hundred miles; so it must have been very like those great African lakes, the Tanganyika and the Nyassa. A large extent of the plain is still marshland, from which, however, extensive rice-fields have been gradually reclaimed. The average level of Antsihànaka is about 1,800 feet lower than that of Imèrina, so that the temperature is more distinctly tropical than in the country of the Hovas, and the vegetation is consequently very luxuriant. Sugar-cane and the papyrus (*zozòro*), as well as other plants, grow here to double the height and size they attain in Imèrina, and large herds of humped cattle are reared on the rich pasture produced by the warm and moist climate. Two or three extinct volcanic cones on the edge of the province show the probable cause of the depression of the surface which the present lake occupies. So much for the physical features of the district we were about to visit.

The inhabitants of the province are probably a branch of the Bétsimisàraka tribe, which occupies a considerable extent of the eastern coast region of Madagascar, and which probably advanced into the interior by the valley through which the overflow of the Alaotra lake makes its way to the sea. Something had already been done to evangelize the Sihànaka before the time of our visit; they had long been distinguished for their attachment to *òdy*, or charms, and also for their intemperance, and their love of ornament; and it is interesting to note how Christian teaching had already began to influence them. No European missionary had then lived among them, and until we saw them they had only been visited once for a few days, five years previously, by the Rev. J. Pearse, so that the advances made were the fruit of native agency alone. Previous to the year 1867 there were a few Christian officers and soldiers from the Capital stationed in the chief town of the province, and they sent urgent requests to the Rev. R. G. Hartley that a teacher might be sent to them. Providentially, a missionary spirit had already been aroused in the Andohàlo church, of which Mr. Hartley was pastor, and when he suggested to the people that they should take up Antsihànaka as a field for mission work, they gladly agreed to the proposal. Rabé, a young man who had been trained at the Normal School and had then been a teacher for three years, was selected as the evangelist. He was a slave, but the congregation, assisted by a few English friends, purchased his freedom, and thus Rabé became the first recognized Malagasy missionary to his heathen fellow-countrymen. He remained in Antsihànaka for nearly three years, and did an excellent work there, gathering together a number of congregations and forming schools at most of them. In this work he was greatly assisted by a young man, one of the Sihànaka, and a Government official, and who became the pastor of the church at the chief town, Ambàtondrazàka. Rabé afterwards returned to Antanànarìvo, entered the L.M.S. training College there, and afterwards was chosen as pastor of one of the city churches ; and from that time, in order to distinguish him from the large number of other men called Rabé, he was known as "Rabésihànaka."

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[1] "Sihànaka" is the name of the people; "Antsihànaka" is the name of the province they occupy.

It is highly probable, however, that since the royal acceptance of Christianity, five years previous to our visit, the desire to please the Queen and the high officers had been a very strong motive with the Government officials to bring the people to attend Christian services, as indeed was the case all over the country wherever the Hova influence extended. But whatever the motive may have been which brought so many of the Sihànaka into the native chapels, there they were at the time of our visit, and a considerable number of their children were receiving a Christian education.

This journey was made together with the Rev. Dr. Mullens and the Rev. J. Pillans, then with us as a deputation from the L.M.S. Directors, and whom I accompanied as interpreter and helper in every possible way.

Our journey was, of course, made in the old native fashion by palanquin (or *filanjàna*), each of us having eight bearers, who, four at a time, took alternate " spells " of carrying; and we had several other men to carry light iron bedsteads, bedding, clothes, and a few European stores in the shape of tinned provisions, etc. We had a tent with us, in which we ate and slept when there was no chapel in a village; but wherever there was such a building, we generally made that our " travellers' bungalow," since the chapel, although not free from certain minute disturbances of our peace, was at least free from smoke and soot, and was much cleaner as well as more spacious than a native house. This enabled us to have interviews with a good number of our native friends, and also to dispense medicine for ordinary ailments.

We had many pleasant evenings in that tent; Dr. Mullens was a bright and lively companion, with interesting experiences to relate of his Indian missionary life; and he liked to recall amusing passages from Dickens and other authors. And we had also many a helpful time of reading and prayer together, and many a talk with native pastors and other Christians.

We set off on our journey on Thursday, June 18th, travelling over high, moory country, very sparsely inhabited, and coming on the Friday afternoon to a large village of seventy houses called Anjòzòrobé, situated on rising ground overlooking the valley of the Mànanàra river. Here we took up our quarters in the clean whitewashed chapel, a clay building outside the village, which was enclosed in a great circular stockade, the houses being all of wood and rush. We were very pleased to find that a good evangelist had been stationed here by one of the large churches in the Capital, and that he had evidently been working well among the people, both old and young.

I examined the school children, who collected together soon after our arrival, and was gratified by their proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and in the leading facts and truths of the Bible. For several reasons we determined to stay at this place over the Sunday; so Saturday was partly spent in taking bearings for our map from a high mountain five miles distant; while in the afternoon Dr. Mullens took photographs, and we dispensed medicine for a number of sick folk.

On Sunday morning we had a crowded congregation, to whom I preached from the great foundation text, John iii. 16. I was preceded by one of our attendants, Rakètamànga, a slave and a good Christian man, a deacon of a city church, and an acceptable earnest preacher; Dr. Mullens termed him "our black chaplain." He greatly assisted me all through our journey, not only by preaching, but also by helping me to teach the people some new tunes which were then very popular in the Capital. I had taken with me some large-type Sol-fa copies of these with the hymns, as well as leaflets, and much gratified the people were to learn them; with unwearied perseverance they sang the tunes over and over and over again, until they were thoroughly mastered. In the afternoon we went to another village two or three miles distant, where we also found a good congregation and an earnest Christian man stationed as the evangelist. Both he and the teacher placed at Anjòzòrobé took charge of two or three other villages situated within a moderate distance; and we were rejoiced to find men of this stamp two days' journey away from the Capital, not even visited by a missionary for more than a year previously, yet faithfully doing their work—we could see this from its results—and preaching and teaching God's truth. Many such men were already stationed in the country districts surrounding Antanànarìvo.

Resuming our journey on Monday morning, midday brought us to the upper belt of forest, and soon afterwards to the summit of the ridge which it covers, through a narrow pass called the "Stone Gateway," from which we had an extensive view in all directions: the Ankày plain before us, the lower line of forest-clad hills beyond it, and the southern part of the Antsihànaka plain just visible far away north. This and the following days' journeys were over pleasant undulating but almost uninhabited country. On reaching the first small Sihànaka village, we noticed an evident difference in the appearance of the people; the women reminded me of those on the east coast, and both men and women had their hair plaited in a great number of little ropes ending in a knot hanging all round the head. The women and children, even those among the latter who had no kind of clothing, all had some sort of ornament: necklaces of red beads, or silver chains, and armlets of silver, a striking contrast to the lower class of Hovas, who only put on ornaments on special occasions. The village smelt strongly of the native rum; and the quantities of chopped-up sugar-cane from which the spirit is made all told of the liking of the people for strong drink.

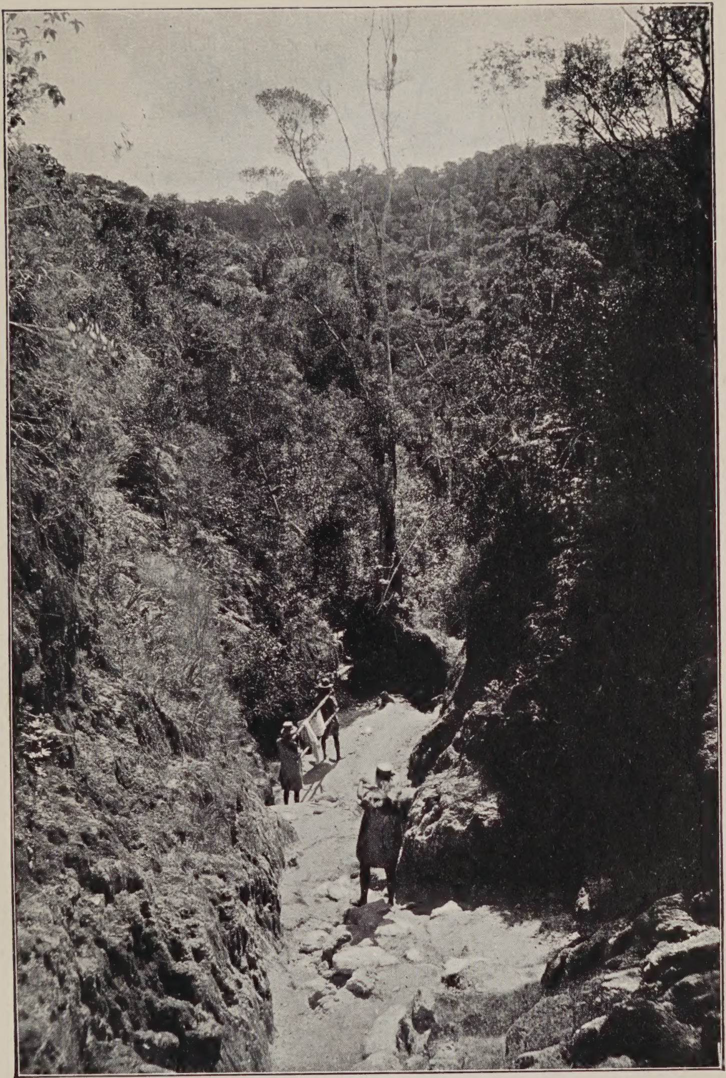
Our Wednesday's journey brought us towards midday to a line of low hills forming the western boundary of the Ankày district, and on reaching the summit we saw before us the vast green plain of Antsihànaka stretching away to the northward, level as a lake, with a few low rounded hills rising out of it like islands from a sea. The path over some of the valleys we crossed was especially difficult: a narrow winding track amongst swamp, prickly bamboo, enormous papyrus and rushes, with here and there deep running streams, whose only bridge was a slippery round pole partly under water; so that we spoke of it afterwards as "the great dismal swamp." But we met with others equally bad, if not worse, on our subsequent journey round the plain. I was struck here, as well as in other parts of the district, by the remarkable fragrance of the wild plants growing everywhere; the scents, equally with the sights and sounds, being a convincing proof that we were really in a tropical country.

Soon after four o'clock we mounted the last low ridge, and Ambàtondrazàka, the chief town of the province, lay before us about a mile and a half distant. The town, consisting of about four hundred houses, is situated on a low peninsula, so to speak, and had a pleasant civilized appearance after the wretched huts we had seen during the last two or three days. A fine broad road divided the town into two pretty equal parts. West of this road a large substantial chapel showed out conspicuously; and on the opposite side was the square palisaded enclosure called the *ròva*, filled with the houses of the Hova officers and soldiers forming the garrison of the place. On arriving at the chapel gateway we soon established ourselves inside the building. It was well built of clay with brick gables, 90 feet long by 36 feet broad, with good doors and windows. The walls were smoothly plastered and whitewashed, and the whole area was covered with fine mats, all sewn together. Sending in our letters of introduction to the Governor, we were in a few minutes requested to walk over and see him.

This functionary, an officer of the 12th honour, who was surrounded by his subordinates and the chief civilians, received us most cordially and seemed a very intelligent elderly man. As soon as we were seated, he addressed us in a formal speech : and as this was but the first of many others of much the same kind, I may give it in full, as a fair specimen of such addresses at that time and for many years following. He spoke as follows : " Since you, gentlemen, have come from the Capital, we ask of you : How is Queen Rànavàlona, sovereign of the land ? How is Rainilaiàrivòny, Prime Minister, protector of the kingdom ? How is our father Rainingòry (the oldest officer in the army, nearly a hundred years of age) ? How is Raìnimàharàvo, Chief Secretary of State, chief of the Officers of the palace ? How is Rabé (son of the preceding) ? How are the Queen's relations ? How is the kingdom of Ambòhimànga and Antanànarìvo (the ancient and modern capitals) ? How are ' the under the heaven ' (the people, the subjects) ? How are you, our friends ? and how is your fatigue after your journey ? " etc., etc.

To all these inquiries I, as interpreter to the expedition, gravely replied *seriatim*, saying that her Majesty was well, that the Prime Minister was well, etc., etc. ; and then I inquired how the Governor and his officers and the people of the town and neighbourhood were. We then had more general and less formal conversation, in which I explained the object of our visit to Antsihànaka, and our proposed route round the district. The Governor then courteously led us back to the chapel, where he joined us in our dinner ; and as soon as that was finished, asked us to come outside. Here we found a quantity of provisions brought for us and our bearers : baskets of rice, geese, fowls, yams, and a large fat pig (a most unwilling offering he was, and loudly protested against the whole business). In a formal speech the Governor offered these things to us, saying that the provisions presented were not theirs, but the Queen's, the Prime Minister's, etc., while they only took charge of it (a polite and loyal fiction, by the way). We found a comfortable (if somewhat airy) bedroom in the spacious chapel, which formed a pleasant contrast to the narrow limits of our 11-foot-square tent.

The following morning was devoted to inspecting the



FOREST TRAVELLING IN MADAGASCAR

place, ascertaining the number of the houses, and taking bearings, observations, and photographs from a point a little distant from the market. In the afternoon we had an examination of the scholars in the school-house, and were pleased to find many who could read fluently; but the majority of those who usually learned were not present, as the children in the country were afraid to come into the town on account of the recent epidemic of small-pox. I taught them a new tune, assisted by our "black chaplain"; and then we were summoned to dine with the Governor in the *làpa* (or government house). On returning to the chapel we got the native pastor, Andrimàhalèo, to accompany us, so that we might learn from him something as to the congregation, and the progress of religious knowledge among the people. It was gratifying to hear that until the appearance of the lately prevalent disease, the large building in which we were sitting was well filled every Sunday; that the church had sent out several teachers to the villages north and west, and that many of the grown-up people had learned to read. I afterwards ascertained that our friend had suffered much during the persecution. The old queen, Rànavàlona I, had given strict orders that none of the Sihànaka should learn to read or write, so that they might be kept in ignorance and subjection; but this man, while yet a lad, managed to pick up some knowledge of both from seeing the letters to and from the military commandant. He afterwards became a Christian and did what he could to teach his fellow-countrymen; and on account of his knowledge and abilities he was afterwards chosen as one of the judges; and when a congregation was formed at Ambàtondrazàka he was appointed pastor of the church there.

On the Friday morning we set off on our circuit round the plain to visit as many of the congregations, and see as much of the country and the position of the Sihànaka villages as was possible in six days, as our time was limited to that period. We were to go westward first, then northward, eastward, cross the Alaotra, and then southward again to Ambàtondrazàka. From the level of the rice-fields the plain stretched northward like an immense green lake; the rotundity of the earth was as clearly seen from the perfect level as it is from the surface of the sea, for the distant low hills appeared like detached islands with nothing to connect their bases.

Every village of the Sihànaka has, near its entrance, a group of two or three tall straight trunks of trees fixed in the ground, varying from 30 to 50 feet in height; the top of these had the appearance of an enormous pair of horns, for the fork of a tree was fixed to the pole, and each branch was sharpened to a point. Besides these, there were generally half a dozen shorter poles, on which were fixed a number of the skulls and horns of bullocks killed at the funeral of people of whom these poles were the memorials. A very curious thing was that several of the taller poles had small tin trunks impaled on one point of the fork; and in several instances baskets and mats were also placed on a railing of wood close to the poles supporting the bullock-horns. These various articles were the property of the deceased, and were put near his grave with the idea of their being of some benefit to his spirit; and perhaps also from the belief, common to most of the Malagasy tribes, of there being pollution attached to everything connected with the dead. As amongst several Eastern nations, the horn is in Madagascar a symbol of power; the native army used to be called *tàndroky ny fànjakàna*—" horns of the kingdom."

At our first stoppage that day at a village of 120 or 130 houses, we found a crowd of people waiting to receive us, and the usual loyal inquiries and compliments were made, and presents of food laid out for our entertainment. The chapel was a small building of wood and rush; but close by it a large and well-proportioned chapel was in course of erection, with massive walls of clay. In the rush building we found the children and young people assembled, quietly waiting our arrival; the most respectable women were also there, all nicely dressed in their best. We got all who could read to do so, about a dozen boys and young men read, and two or three girls. We found that most of them were native Sihànaka, and we were impressed with the pleasing intelligent faces of many of them, several having a strong Malay cast of countenance. After they had read, I addressed a few words to them, telling them the object of our visit, and in as simple and earnest language as I could find, speaking of the great truths of the Gospel, and urging them to seek God and believe in Christ as their Saviour. I should add that before this they sang a most pleasing melody to the words of the 100th Psalm. There was something deeply touching to us to see these poor simple-minded people, evidently so willing to be taught; so that we earnestly longed to be able to place teachers and competent pastors among them.

For the first time since we had left home we had a meal in an ordinary native house, and could notice the arrangement of a Sihànaka dwelling. I immediately observed that instead of there being *one* post at each end and at the centre of the house to support the ridge, as in the Imèrina houses, this had *three* at each gable, just as the Bétsimisàraka on the east coast have, confirming my belief that the Sihànaka came up from the sea to this interior fertile plain. Instead of the one door and window on the west side, as in the Hova houses, the Sihànaka make two doors on that side, with high thresholds, dividing it into three equal parts, and have a low door on the eastern side, coming where the fixed bedstead is placed in Imèrina. Here the bedstead was at the south-east instead of the north-east corner; and the hearth, with its framework above for holding property of various kinds, was in a different part of the floor.

During our afternoon journey we were impressed by the abundance of the bird-life, especially of the water-fowl—wild ducks and wild geese of many species—which found a congenial home and feeding-grounds in the swamps and small lakes occurring everywhere. It seemed a very paradise for a sportsman. We were only able to have short talks with people at the villages which we passed and where we stopped for the night of Friday, as we were anxious to reach Ampàrafàravòla, the second principal town in the province, for Sunday services, and there only remained six days afterwards to finish our visitation of the Sihànaka people.

We were off early on the Saturday morning, as we had a full ten-hours' journey to make before we could reach our destination. We were now skirting the western edge of the great level, now and then crossing patches of swamp, and again remarking the abundance of wild birds of various kinds—herons, black and white storks, wild ducks, partridges, and many others. The fen country of the eastern midland counties of England must have been very much like this Antsihànaka plain before the great drainage works were carried out, and the waters were led off to the sea. Towards midday we came to a large village of nearly a hundred houses, where the usual speech-making had to be gone through; and then we went into the rush chapel, where the scholars and most of the women were assembled. We asked those who could read to do so, upon which about a dozen of the boys and young men read from the Gospel of Luke; none of the girls or women seemed able to read, and it appeared that no one knew much more than a little of this primary element of education. I then spoke to them for a short time about the leading truths of the gospel, and urged them to be diligent in learning and in attending worship. They then sang the hymn *Jèso Mpamònjy* ("Jesus the Saviour") to the tune of "Hail to the brightness," but with many variations from the original and very slowly; after which I prayed and dismissed them.

After a meal and taking compass observations, we proceeded on our way, keeping still along the western side of the plain. The population appeared to increase as we went northwards; and we passed good-sized villages where we were unable to stop, as they were some distance out of our direct road, and we were pressed for time. After three or four hours' travelling we came to the end of one of many low and long lines of hill which cross the plain diagonally, and, mounting to its summit, we had a smooth and level road along the top for a considerable distance. From it we had a delightful view, the great flat surface of the plain still appearing like an immense lake, the distant eastern hills seeming to rise out of a green expanse of water. From our road we could see the high rounded hill which rises above Ampàrafàravòla, and after a time the little town itself began to show above the plain.

At about five o'clock we came to a long piece of water through which the road (?) took us to the foot of a steep abrupt hill, on which the large village of Ambòhipèno was situated. This place was surrounded by a clay wall, and had about ninety houses. The water through which our bearers carried us was about four feet deep, and, emerging from it, as we got up the slope nearer the village, we could see a number of people assembled to meet us, and on arriving at the top had a most pleasing reception. As we began to ascend the singers struck up a hymn; they were all seated on one side of the road, the school children on the other, while a little further on were a crowd of people headed by the elderly men of the place. One of these, a pleasant-looking old man, received us with the usual speeches and presents of food, to which, of course, I had to reply. After a few minutes' delay, and promising to come and see them on the following afternoon, we pushed on, for it was near sunset, and we had still three or four miles to traverse before reaching our destination.

It was about an hour after sundown before we reached Ampàrafàravòla, but a bright moon near the full prevented any difficulty in travelling. The town itself we found was almost entirely a Hova settlement, and consisted of about ninety houses inside a stockade of palisading; but within a short distance there were about as many Sihànaka houses, while there were also two or three small villages very near the town. On the west side of the place was a large well-built clay chapel, but not yet finished. Our first look at it, without any doors or window shutters, made us doubtful whether we could use it as a lodging, especially as the evening breeze blew sharply through the numerous openings; however, as we found that there were temporary doors and shutters of *zozòro* rush, which filled them up to some extent, we decided we had better stay in it. In a few minutes after our arrival the Lieutenant-Governor and his attendants came to welcome us; and then, of course, came loyal inquiries and polite speeches, and after a little time presents of beef, rice, and poultry, etc.

The people assembled early on Sunday morning, and as soon as we had stowed away our packages, beds, etc., at the further end and covered them over with our tent to make things tidy, we let them in. Mr. Pillans had a gorgeously coloured rug, which again did duty as covering for the rough little table which served as a reading-desk, while the doctor's photographic chemical box made it a convenient height. The chapel was soon filled with people, about 450 in number; they all came in following the Governor and his officers, who took their seats first. Then came the Commander's wife, who, with two or three others, were dressed in European style, the chief men of the congregation also wearing European dress. The ladies, however, did not use chairs, but had cushions laid on the floor. About half the congregation seemed to be Sihànaka and the rest Hovas.

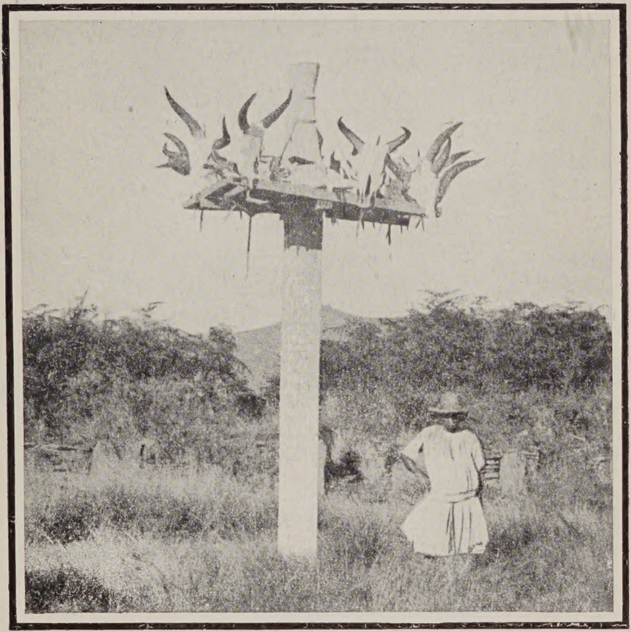
Our good "black chaplain" preached first, and took the very same text I was intending to preach from, viz., 1 Tim. i. 15: "This is a faithful saying," etc. However, as he took quite a different line of thought from mine, I did not alter my subject, but preached from the same verse. Dr. Mullens also gave a short address in English, which I translated sentence by sentence. I was interested to find that the singers had somehow or other got from Ambòhimànga three or four of the tunes we had taught our people there: "St. Werburgh," "Bridge Street," "Mariners," etc., but they had woefully altered them! As soon as service was over, they begged me to teach them a new tune; so, as at Anjòzòrobé, the large paper copy of *Mìsy tàny màhafàly* ("There is a happy land") was fixed up, and we practised it until we had to ask them to let our dinner be brought in. They then removed into the school-house and sang away until it was almost time for the afternoon service; and then again in the evening until late at night. They also learnt another new tune and hymn, *Alahàdy àndro tsàra* ("Sunday, blessed day"); and not only on Sunday night, but early next morning, they were still working away at these two tunes; and the last thing we heard as we left the place and at length lost sight of it behind the hill was "*Mìsy tàny màhafàly.*" Our good helper and native preacher sang away indefatigably at them both, leading the people and teaching them the different parts until he had hardly any voice left.

As soon as dinner was over, Mr. Pillans and I set off for Ambòhipèno to preach to the people who had received us so pleasantly on the preceding evening. We wanted to give our men a perfect rest after their fatiguing journey yesterday, and so got some Sihànaka bearers. They jolted us not a little, being unused to such work; carrying logs of timber was much more in their line than English missionaries. However, we got to the place quickly and found the little chapel filled with people waiting for us. They sang two or three hymns to native tunes, one to the Jubilee hymn being of a specially pleasing character. How we longed for the true Jubilee of the Spirit to come and set free these poor simple, ignorant, captive souls, still in so much darkness and bondage. I preached to them from John iii. 16, and Mr. Pillans also spoke to them in English, which I translated. As we got back to Ampàrafàravòla we found the people only just dispersing from afternoon service. Dr. Mullens had been much pleased to find that the whole congregation had learnt well and repeated, as a part of the regular afternoon service, a good portion of the larger catechism. We had intended to ask the Governor to dine with us, but he and his officers wished us to go and "eat rice" with them in the temporary *làpa.* Our dinner was served in a thoroughly native style, being cooked in the same place where we ate it, and with about a score of people helping to serve us three, their guests. The chief cook would not allow us to make any permanent impression on the heaped-up piles of rice and turkey on our plates, for every few minutes they were replenished with fresh supplies of food, so we were at length obliged to give up the unequal contest.

Before dinner they came to ask us if the band should play during the entertainment, but as I felt doubtful as to the kind of tunes the band-master might have available for the occasion, I said that being Sunday it might be well to omit the compliment; but I readily agreed to their suggestion that the singers should give us some hymns instead, which they did outside the house. We then returned to our chapel lodgings, greatly pleased with much we had seen during the day. An hour or two afterwards the Governor and an intelligent young man came in for a little talk about church matters. We found that these two acted as pastors of the congregation; and were impressed with the quiet and simple earnest manner of the former. He told us that it was twelve years since he had been in the Capital; and considering the little knowledge he could have obtained from English missionaries, and his very limited advantages, isolated very much as he was even from passing travellers of his own countrymen, we could not but feel that he had done well with his single talent. He seemed most anxious for the benefit of the people, and they both appeared to have done all they could to instruct the congregation. The teacher of the school also came, and from him we learned that there were about seventy scholars, of whom twenty-five could read. As at places previously visited, I left with pastors and teachers a few books, etc., to help them in their work.

After leaving Ampàrafàravòla, I remembered an amusing incident connected with this place related in the journal of two students from the College who were sent two years previously to visit this district and other scattered congregations in the same direction. They said that during their stay here the people asked them many questions about matters that perplexed them, one of which had to be carefully arranged ; it was as follows : " The people inquired, ' When it is Sunday, and the water in the house happens to be all used, is it right to fetch a little from the spring ? ' He replied, ' That's a matter one can't lay down a rule for ' ; but we bade them buy three big water-pots, and every Saturday evening have them filled, so that those whose water is expended on Sunday, or who have strangers come unexpectedly, might take from them what they wanted. These big pots were to be called ' Charity water-pots ' ; to all which they cheerfully agreed, and appointed three men to be superintendents of these water-pots, both as to filling them and giving out supplies." Had we remembered the incident we should certainly have asked for a sight of the " Charity water-pots," and inquired how the arrangement worked.

On Monday morning Mr. Pillans and I walked up a rounded and scarped hill about a mile to the north-east of the town, and were much interested to find also that this hill was an extinct crater, for large masses of lava were scattered all over it from base to summit, especially on its north-western slopes. Bidding our good friends farewell, although they much wished to keep us longer, we still proceeded northwards on our journey. After some time we came to high ground, where we could see the whole length of the Alaotra lake from north to south. Some places were very boggy and difficult to traverse, with the most complicated and imprac-



CARVED MEMORIAL POST, WITH SKULLS OF OXEN KILLED AT FUNERAL

ticable bridges we had yet seen, even in Antsihànaka. Some of these were in three stages, one a steepish ascent, the middle span fairly level, and another going down into *water*, not on to dry land, and none boasting of more than a slippery round pole as footway. The country in this direction seemed almost uninhabited until we came in the afternoon to a good-sized village with ninety houses, called Ambòhijànahàry. The only sign of man's influence we saw during the middle of the day was a large herd of fine cattle.

I was afterwards told of a curious custom formerly practised by the Sihànaka at the time of circumcision observance. They used to choose one of the largest oxen to be found, and then sharpened his horns to a fine point; after two or three days' continuous drinking, when they had got perfectly maddened with spirits and ready for any foolhardy adventure, a party would rush out to attack this ox, but without any weapons. As the animal became infuriated, he, of course, defended himself by goring his enemies, many of whom he generally seriously hurt, and some occasionally killed outright; while the man who escaped without any injury was considered as born under a lucky star, and was resorted to by numbers of people to give them charms to protect them from various kinds of calamity.

Ambòhijànahàry proved to be a poor, dirty place, and the chapel the smallest one we had yet seen in the district. The usual speeches, presents, and inquiries about religious matters came in due course; but my oratorical efforts became briefer, and my companions remarked that the flowery parts of my speeches in reply were gradually curtailed as we proceeded further on our way. We had here reached the furthest northern point of our journey, and as our time did not allow us to go round the head of the lake we were on the following day to turn eastward.

Tuesday was a disappointing and unsatisfactory day, as we only travelled three hours, and rain and mist came on soon, while the path was over water and bog and swamp, which was also all round the village in which we had to stay for the rest of the day and the night. We went from this place to the western shore of the lake—only three-quarters of an hour's ride, but as there were no canoes we could, of course, proceed no further. The afternoon had turned out fine, and the picture was a pleasant one from the shore; the broad expanse of blue water with the waves dancing and sparkling in the sunlight; the villages on the green hills across the lake, here about three or four miles wide; and behind these, grand masses of mountains, with a good deal of dark forest capping them. To the north-east was distinctly visible an extinct volcanic crater, with a large portion of one of its sides broken down and revealing the immense cup-shaped hollow within. A stiff breeze had raised waves of a size to be quite formidable to such cranky craft as Malagasy canoes are. This was, of course, the reason why no canoe was available for us at that time of the day, but the people at the village did not tell us this, although subsequent journeys along the east coast of Madagascar showed me that the afternoon is always an unsafe time to cross the coast lagoons and lakes.

On Wednesday morning we left Ambòhitsàra very early, so as to cross the Alaotra as soon after sunrise as possible, as this is always the calmest time of the day on Madagascar waters. We found about a dozen large canoes waiting for us; several of these were from thirty to forty feet long, and three to four feet beam, each hollowed out of a single tree. Although we had embarked and got off at about half-past seven, the wind had already risen somewhat, and there was quite a swell on the water. But the sail across was most delightful. As we proceeded, the northern shores opened up, showing two deep bays stretching far away between the hills, and an island where the Sihànaka made their last stand in resisting Hova domination.

At length we landed at the foot of a hill on which a village of about eighty houses was built, and mounted to the top by a steep pathway. Here a most extensive and lovely view presented itself, I think the most beautiful of its kind I had ever seen in Madagascar. The lake lay before us, stretching far away to the southward in a great rounded curve, and with its indented bays and island fastness to the northward. The changing shades of purple and blue of the water; the bright green of the plain beyond; and the varied outline of hill and mountain in the far background to west and north, all lit up by the brilliant sunshine —made as charming a picture as an artist could desire to transfer to canvas. But we had little time to spare to enjoy it, and so after hastily taking bearings we went on southwards to Màrosalàzana, a village on a hill three or four miles away.

On entering the village, a place with about sixty houses, we found a crowd of about four hundred people waiting to receive us. After a formal reception by the authorities, we found the school children assembled on an open raised place in the centre of the village, a group of nearly a hundred altogether, all dressed in their best. Many of the girls had a peculiar kind of collar to their dress, consisting of seven or eight massive silver chains of different patterns; they also wore armlets of silver. Many of these children and young people had most intelligent and pleasant faces. We heard them read, and then I was delighted to find that they knew the shorter catechism well. I talked to them a little about it, and then addressed a few words to the numbers of people crowded round the children, speaking to them of the great love of God in sending His Son. It was an interesting scene: the bright intelligent group of children in the centre; the crowd of wondering Sihànaka on each side; the little knots of women in their dark blue dresses and silver ornaments; and the lovely view of lake and plain and mountain beyond—all made a picture attractive in its outward aspects, but still more interesting as one thought of these people as apparently prepared to welcome a fuller teaching of God's truth than they had yet received. The teacher, a young man, seemed to have been most diligent, and I was pleased to be able to give him lesson-sheets and books. The children then sang two hymns very correctly, after which we had to receive a bountiful supply of provisions for ourselves and our men.

The pleasant scene at this village, as well as what we had witnessed at others, gave a cheering promise of what might be expected were the people more thoroughly instructed. In a short report supplied by Rabésihànaka, the first native evangelist, he said that when he first went to work in the province, "only a person could be found here and there who washed their clothes, for everyone's dress was smeared with castor-oil, and they thought it would spoil their clothing to wash it, as it would soon be worn out; so that the clothing of the people was offensive to the last degree. For that reason the dark blue cotton was generally worn, as it was nearly black to begin with. But now, he said, there is hardly anyone who does not wash his clothes, and has not white dress. Not long ago, when it was evening, the young men in the villages used to form into two parties and had violent boxing-matches all through the village, the women also often joining in the fray. But now no one practises this rough sport." And then he went on to speak of the great diminution of drinking habits. Probably our friend took too rose-coloured a view of the change in the Sihànaka generally; for the experience of the missionaries who subsequently settled in the province and lived there for many years showed conclusively that some of the evils of which Rabé wrote as ceasing had still a strong hold upon the people, especially the drinking habit. And their superstitions and strange customs had still great power over them for long afterwards, and much of it probably exists up to the present time. The following particulars as to one class of the Sihànaka will prove this statement:

In one of the villages situated in the dense papyrus thickets which cover the marshes to the south of the lake, a place called Anoròro, lives a strange tribe of people who seem quite isolated, not only in their dwelling-place, but also in their barbarous habits, from the other Sihànaka, and who speak a distinctly different dialect. In the rainy season, when the water rises, it enters into the houses of these people, and they then put together several layers of *zozòro* to form a kind of raft, so that as the water rises this raft rises with it. Upon these *zozòro* they make their hearths and their beds; and there they live, rising and falling with the water, until the rainy season is over, and they can live on dry ground again. These people have no fewer than eight unlucky days in each month, so that during more than a quarter of their time their superstition prevents them from going about or engaging in any work. All over Antsihànaka, Thursday is considered as *fàdy* (tabooed), and no one will work in their rice-fields on that day. One of the missionaries wrote: "There is abundance of *tòaka* (rum) made in Antsihànaka, and it is to be found in every house, for they think it shows a want of respect to visitors if they have not plenty of *tòaka* to give them. Whatever be the business on hand, whether funerals or rejoicing, nothing can be done without drinking *tòaka*."

We left Màrosalàzana ("many poles") at one o'clock and proceeded southward and homeward, passing several large villages and stopping for the night at one called Ambòhimànga. On Thursday morning towards ten o'clock we reached Ambàtondrazàka, being again most kindly and hospitably received by the Governor and his officers. They were disappointed, as were we also, that we could not spend the Sunday with them, but engagements already made by the Deputation obliged us to hasten homewards; so by taking a long half-day's journey on Friday, and a very long day's travelling on Saturday, we managed to reach Anjòzòrobé on the evening of that day, and so had a quiet and peaceful Sunday rest after our week's work, spendîng it again with our good friends. Two days more brought us back to the Capital, after a journey of about twenty days, full of interest and encouragement.

I may add here that as a result of our visit to the province, the Directors resolved to station a missionary in Antsihànaka; and during the following year Mr. and Mrs. Pearse took up their residence at Ambàtondrazàka and laboured there with much devotion and success for six years, after which Mr. Pearse was asked to go to the help of the Bétsiléo mission. Subsequently, Mr. Stribling settled at the Capital of the province, while Dr. Mackay and his wife began medical work at a healthy position to the east of the Alaotra, building a hospital there, and with other missionaries doing much to benefit the people both physically and spiritually. Work was thus carried on until the unsettled state of the country following on the French conquest of Madagascar in 1895 rendered the position of English missionaries so difficult that they were withdrawn, and the people were left without European help.

For some years afterwards the Antsihànaka province was put in charge of native missionaries sent out by the Malagasy Church Union, with the occasional visit of an English missionary; and satisfactory progress was made in some parts of the district. Owing, however, to the propaganda subsequently carried on by the Jesuit mission, it seemed necessary that European superintendence should again be given by Protestant missionaries; and arrangements were made to secure such help and guidance for the people. This was effected in 1921, by Dr. Moss and his wife settling at Imèrimandròso, and commencing dispensary and hospital work, assisted in this by a trained nurse. At the same time, Rev. D. O. and Mrs. Jones were transferred from Imèrina to superintend the church work of the Antsihànaka Mission.

Following the determination of the Centenary Conference in 1920 to do more for the outlying and heathen districts, in 1922 Mrs. Milledge and Rev. J. T. Jones and his wife (newly arrived from England) proceeded to the Tsimìhèty province in August, and commenced a mission station at Màndritsàra, an important village, and distant about 260 miles north of the Capital.

CHAPTER VIII

CHURCH INSTITUTIONS AND OBSERVANCES AMONG THE MALAGASY

I WANT in this chapter to give some clear idea of the way in which Christianity has affected the church life and also the social life of the people of Madagascar, and of the various institutions which have grown up among them, especially in the thirty years during which I was connected with the College, as already described.

The Malagasy are a sociable and friendly people, and here I mean particularly the Hovas, whom our work has chiefly affected; their family affections are strong, and they were accustomed for a long time past to constantly meet together in family and tribal gatherings, such as marriages and funerals, and at circumcision times, as well as in the great open-air weekly markets which are a notable feature of their social life. Christianity has engrafted itself somewhat easily upon these national characteristics, and has brought much greater brightness and variety into their daily lives, even although a large proportion of those who attend Christian services may not acknowledge its highest claims.

The first L.M.S. missionaries to Madagascar made the founding of *Schools* a very important part of their work. They knew quite well that it would be difficult to change very much the lives and habits of the older people, but they felt that if they could influence the children and teach *them* the main facts and truths of Christianity, they were laying the foundation of a more intelligent and enlightened community. During the fifteen years they were allowed to carry on their work they founded schools not only in the Capital, where they lived, but also in most of the small towns of the central province. From a Report of "The Madagascar Missionary School Society" for 1828, not eight years after they began their labours, and now open before me, I see that they had then thirty-five schools in Imèrina, and one on the south-east coast; and in these there were 2,300 scholars and ninety teachers, whom they had also trained, so that before the time they were obliged to leave the island between eleven or twelve thousand children had received a good Christian education.

In doing this work, in its early stages at least, they had few of the modern helps to teaching. Mr. Cameron told us that at the beginning of the schools "there was no printing, and not many slates; all lessons were written by hand, and as a substitute for slates smooth boards were rubbed over with soft grease and dusted with ashes. On this the letters and figures were formed with a wooden style, like a common pencil; corrections were made or sums renewed by simply rubbing off with a rag or with the finger, and commencing again as contentedly as if no cleanlier or better mode had ever been found out. Yet in that school were first taught in such a way the flower of the youth of Imèrina." The fact that thousands of children were so taught during that early time of missionary effort in Madagascar was no doubt one of the chief causes of the spread of Christianity during the persecution: *there was a widely diffused knowledge of its truth in the minds of thousands of young people.* I emphasize this fact, as it has not, I think, been sufficiently appreciated in considering the growth of the Malagasy Church during the twenty-five years when "the land was dark."

The importance of education was recognized by the Directors of the L.M.S. when their Madagascar mission was recommenced in 1862, for one of the party of six who reached the Capital in July of that year was Mr. Charles Stagg, a trained school teacher. After his early death in the year 1864, others, including ladies, were sent out for educational work; High Schools for boys and girls were begun, teachers were trained, and to my friends Mr. Richardson and Mr. Sharman, to Miss Cameron, Miss Bliss, Miss Craven, and to others, who for longer or shorter periods took part in the work, both the Malagasy Church and the nation are much indebted. In almost every village church a day school was taught; and for several years two School Inspectors, Messrs. Thorne and Lord, with their native assistants, carried on yearly examinations of all the schools, and did all that was possible by preparing standards, time-tables, and school-books, etc., to keep them in a high state of efficiency.

For many years past, therefore, one of the duties of every missionary in charge of a district has been to accompany the inspector every year to different centres in his district and spend a fortnight or so in examining the schools, half a dozen, more or less, at a time, at some central village, upon what the children have learnt during the year. And very pleasant occasions these were, although often very fatiguing, but varying much, of course, according to the number of children present, from a hundred and fifty to three hundred and more. Beginning pretty early in the morning, school after school would come in, most of the children in their best clothes and looking neat and clean, and would take their places either on forms or on the mats spread over the earthen floor. After a hymn and prayer, the numbers present from each school would be counted, then the number of slates and Bibles or Testaments; then the reading one by one of every scholar who could spell out intelligibly two or three verses of Scripture, or a paragraph from a magazine. Writing from dictation follows, and then arithmetic, and while the examiner goes through the slates and writes on them the marks obtained, the missionary goes through the Scripture catechism, taking each school in rotation for the answers; and so about midday comes a break of an hour for some refreshment, kindly provided by the congregation in the shape of the invariable "rice and fowl." The afternoon will be occupied in slate examination on Bible characters, grammar and geography, and, since the French occupation, in elementary French. Then comes the making up of the totals, the reading-out of the same, and the giving of prizes according to the ability shown by each scholar, consisting of Bibles, Testaments, hymn-books, illustrated books, pocket-knives, pens and pencils, pictures, etc., while the girls sometimes receive dressed dolls, work-bags, needle cases, scissors, cottons, and needles, etc., sent out by kind friends in England; often every child present gets some trifling gift to encourage him or her.

The chief people of that central village are generally present, as well as many of the parents, proud and happy to see their children's success; they will thank the school inspector and the missionary for their visit and for the prizes distributed, while their visitors take the opportunity of impressing on the people the importance of education, and urge them to encourage it in every possible way. And how often, as the declining sunshine was lighting up the red soil and making it glow with still more ruddy hues, have I watched the long lines of little white-robed figures go streaming along the footpaths over the bare moory hills and downs in different directions to their homes, two or three miles away, after their long day's examination; how often have I not thanked God for these children, and the influence at work for their good and their uplifting.

There has naturally been during my long experience in Madagascar a great change and advance in *the buildings erected for Christian worship.* In Chapter IV, I have described what primitive structures some of the first of these were, especially those which the congregations afterwards occupying the Memorial Churches had before these were built. Other churches in the Capital were of much the same kind, and of course those in the country were no better. The walls were of the red clay forming the soil everywhere, and which, if properly prepared and laid, makes a very substantial and durable walling. The roofing was of the *hèrana* rush, or of the long coarse grass which grows on the bare open downs. The doors and window shutters were pretty rough specimens of carpentry; the seating was the earthen floor covered with coarse mats, renewed perhaps once a year; and the pulpit was often merely an ordinary table; there was therefore no special "design" required; the church, which also served as the school-house, was simply a native house, larger and longer, as might be needed by the size of the village.

But during the last twenty or thirty years the Malagasy have shown a great desire to have more substantial and more handsome buildings to meet in, and they give well towards the cost of such an improved church; and although until recently they received a grant of a very small sum from the L.M.S. to encourage them, by far the greater part of the expense, in money as well as in labour, comes from the congregation itself. The old clay or sun-dried brick buildings are being largely replaced by churches of some architectural pretensions in burnt-brick and stone, with fittings to match, in the shape of galleries, pulpit-platforms, etc., and glass windows. Of my own share in this work of church designs and drawings I may speak later on. In the third chapter of this book I described the manual labour cheerfully given by all classes of the congregation at Manjàharày in building their church ; and although the changed conditions of society since the French conquest do not admit of quite the same work being done now, yet the people still do a great deal for the erection of a new church by their own bodily efforts, especially in making the sun-dried bricks which continue to be largely used for interior walling.

The way in which funds for building a new church are generally obtained may be briefly described. After getting some preliminary drawing or sketch, showing something like what they wish to have and think they can afford, a good part (often far too large a part) of every Sunday morning is usually occupied with collecting and writing down the subscriptions and calling out the names of the donors of the money for the new erection. A list will be prepared by the pastor and deacons of all the members of the congregation (sometimes of the whole village), and a preliminary assessment made of what they think should be given by each one, from the richest donor to the very poorest, including (in former times) the slaves. A large proportion of the time usually employed in worship and preaching is largely given up to calling out names and announcing the amount given by each ; and of course many persons object to give the amount put down for them. So when each one comes up to the table where the deacons sit and says how much he intends to give—often very much less than his assessment, there will be howls of dissent and disapproval, until, thus pressed and ashamed, he will gradually advance to what was thought his proper contribution, and which, frequently, everyone knew he could well afford. Sometimes he would be reminded of some good bargain he had made, or of how much he had sold an ox for, or the produce of some rice-field, etc.

Then would come applause, if, as sometimes happens, a donor pays his money in one sum; but more frequently the promised subscription is paid in instalments, as the building slowly proceeds; for very often church building drags on for three or four years or more. In this way, as may be supposed, a good portion of many Sunday mornings is employed in calling out names and money, and receiving the cash, which, before the conquest be it remembered, was in "cut money," that is, dollars or five-franc pieces, cut up into all shapes and sizes from a half-dollar to minute fragments. And this money had to be carefully weighed out, and every piece of silver carefully scrutinized, lest bad money should be tendered. Often at such times a hymn and prayer to begin with, possibly a short chapter read, and the benediction and dismissal hymn at the close would be all the religious portion of the morning's proceedings.

After we had been settled in the Capital and had had charge of the Anàlakèly church for six years, our people began to be dissatisfied with the building erected some four-and-twenty years previously. It was beginning to show signs of weakness, for its walls were only of sun-dried brick, and as some of the country congregations had already got more substantial and handsome structures, our folks determined to have a somewhat larger and much superior building, both in design and materials. Of course they looked to me to prepare drawings for this, and although at first I did not at all encourage them, as I knew what additional labour it would bring me, I soon found that it would be wise to defer to their wishes and began to prepare preliminary sketches for the new building.

We had, fortunately, a large school-house only two or three hundred yards distant from the church, and it was therefore very easy for us to move into this building and to use a number of our forms and seating, our pulpit and our harmonium, in our temporary place of worship. I prepared a drawing showing the principal front and cross-section of the proposed new church, and this was submitted to the Queen and the Prime Minister for their approval. This being obtained, together with the promise of a handsome donation towards the erection, we held our last Sunday services in the church built by Mr. Pearse, and I preached a farewell sermon on the afternoon of April 21, 1889, from the words, "Little children, it is the last time," and tried to impress upon my hearers the responsibilities they had incurred, from the hundreds of sermons they had listened to, and from the numerous services in which they had joined in that place, during the preceding quarter of a century. We met in the school-house on the following Sunday, and the destruction of the old building immediately commenced, the glass windows and the doors being bought by one of our country congregations; and soon the site was cleared for the new structure to be commenced.

Our people gave liberally for their new church, and, including generous gifts from her Majesty and the Directors of the L.M.S., as well as from some of our private friends, the large sum of 2,500 dollars was raised and expended in its erection. (A dollar was then nearly equivalent in value to a pound with us in England.) The congregations of our district also gave us valuable help by bringing up from the forest, thirty to forty miles distant, the large timbers required for the roof (we had no roads or vehicles in those days); and it was decided to use no sun-dried brick in the new building, but burnt-brick throughout, inside as well as outside, with stone base courses and dressings.

Much the same style of getting in the money was adopted by our people as that I have already described as usual in other places, although I reduced greatly the time usually occupied whenever I took the service myself. A scheme of subscription, or rather assessment, was drawn up, commencing with those who should give a hundred dollars each, and then descending the scale to fifty, forty, thirty, twenty, and ten dollars, and so on, down to the very poorest, who were to give twopence. Against the highest subscription group only two names were written, viz., those of the officer of highest rank and richest in the congregation, and—ourselves! I protested against this, as my wife and I had promised special donations in the shape of some of the most important fittings of the new church, to say nothing of my contribution of all the drawings required, numbering about a dozen sheets, and involving a large amount of time and labour. And the Anàlakèly "mother church" was not the only one then building, as three or four new village churches were almost always going on, and I was expected to give liberally to them also. However, I gladly agreed to join the fifty-dollar group of givers; and I promised also to procure for the church, while on furlough, all the glass required for the twenty-three windows of the new building. The foundations were laid deep and firm, and soon the base courses and the walls began to appear; our pastor, Rainibao, spending most of his time on the ground seeing after the work, and our church secretary superintending the workmen and keeping the accounts.

In the month of May of the following year (1890) came our next furlough to England, but my good friend, Mr. W. Johnson, of the Friends' Mission, a talented architect himself, most kindly took charge of the drawings, and gave much attention to the church; and the building owes much of its good workmanship to the time and pains he devoted to it during my absence from Madagascar. When I returned in 1892 I found the walling all finished, except the bell turret, and the principals of the roof being fixed in their places. But owing to the second Franco-Malagasy War it was a long time before we completed the building; indeed, it was not until May 1895 that it was opened by a series of services lasting over a week, so that the church was about six years in course of construction. It was, I believe, generally admired, and its appearance may be seen in the accompanying illustration.

During my furlough in England I obtained from Colonel Pilkington, of St. Helens, the very generous gift of all the glass required for the church, cathedral-tinted glass, toning down somewhat the brilliant light of a tropical sky. The pulpit, lectern, Communion table, arcaded platform railing, and chancel stalls and chairs are all of the beautiful native wood called *vòambòana*, and were made by native carpenters under my daily supervision, and, together with the stone platform and font, were all special gifts from friends and relatives and ourselves. Need I add that it was a matter for great joy and thankfulness to be able for about twenty years to preach God's truth and to conduct all kinds of services in the building I had spent so much time and thought upon ?

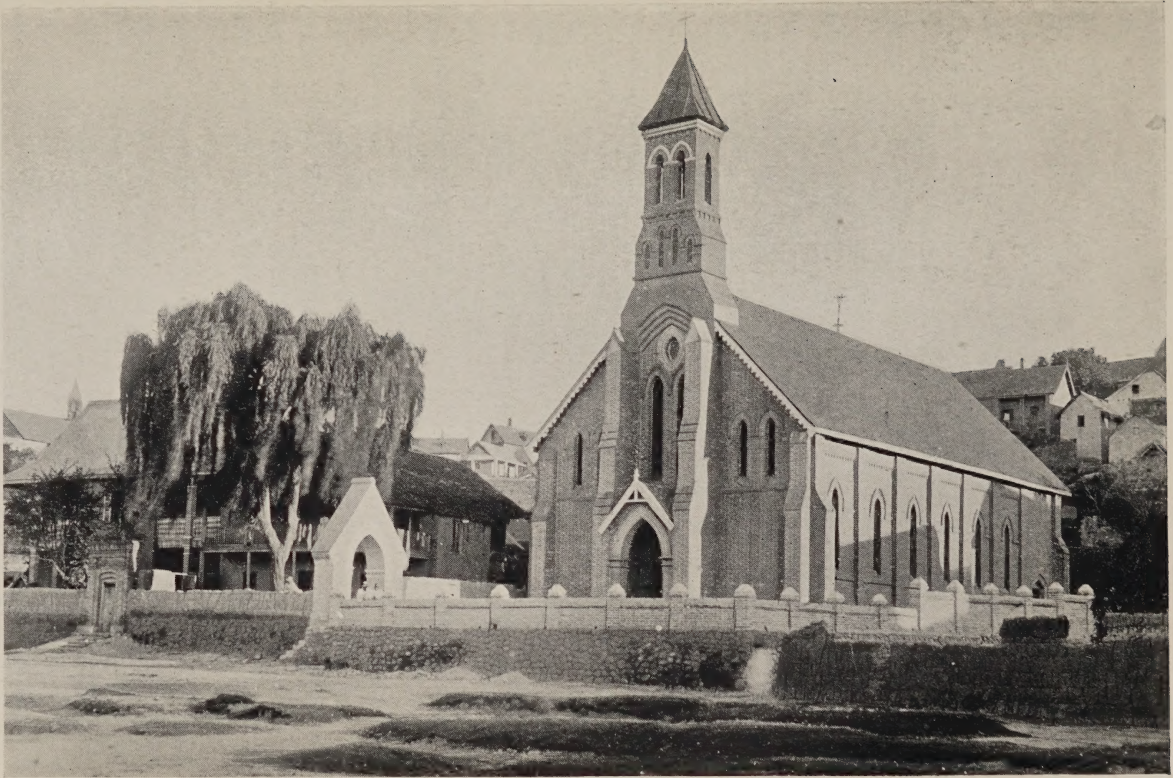
The *Sunday School* has taken firm hold on the Malagasy Churches, and is an important part of their Christian activity. The first missionaries (1820–1836) did not commence such schools ; they had a great deal of other and even more important work to do, and they probably felt that the religious teaching in the numerous day-schools they founded throughout Imèrina sufficiently supplied the needs of the children at that time. But soon after the L.M.S. misssion was recommenced in 1862 it was seen that the *teaching* of Scripture facts and doctrines as well as *preaching* them was necessary, and, as already noted in Chapter IV, I took a humble part in the earliest efforts of this kind, my fellow missionaries, Mr. Cameron and Mr. Parrett, being the first to give Scriptural teaching on Sundays. The example we thus set was gradually followed by several of the stronger congregations in the Capital, although the older native Christians looked with some disfavour on the movement, just because the first missionaries had not founded Sunday Schools! Our younger Christian people, however, soon saw the necessity for such instruction, and began to take part in it, and so for many years the Sunday School has been an indispensable feature of our church work. At Anàlakèly our Sunday School was commenced on September 21, 1884 ; the first anniversary service in the following year was, by her Majesty's kind permission, held in her own church in the palace yard. At this service the Queen was present and showed much interest in the Sunday School, generously giving a good sum for procuring prizes for the scholars. In more recent years efforts have been made to carry out a graded system of instruction on the lines introduced by Mr. Alexander ; lessons for senior, intermediate, and junior classes have been prepared and printed every month for the guidance of the teachers, and yearly examinations are carried out to test the knowledge and progress of the scholars ; and in the more advanced churches preparation classes for the study by the teachers of the Sunday lessons are held.

The yearly Sunday School anniversary day is a great occasion in the churches of the Capital, as well as in many of the village congregations. At Anàlakèly our church is always crowded on that day, the spacious gallery as well as the body of the building being filled with people. The scholars, about three hundred in number, are massed together round the pulpit-platform, and the mothers take much pride in having their children well dressed for the occasion. The morning service has always a very full programme, for many of the Malagasy have remarkable ability in composing and in teaching and learning new tunes and musical pieces, often to newly written hymns for the day. A number of speeches and dialogues have been prepared and learned by the scholars, which they—boys and girls, too—recite with great accuracy and good emphasis, and they sing the new tunes, which are often rather intricate and difficult compositions. (Our own native organist is extremely clever in composing new music of this kind.) Suitable Scripture lessons are read and prayers are offered by several of the teachers; a report is read by the School secretary, and the missionary in charge, or some one else—European or Malagasy—delivers an appropriate address.

The afternoon service is largely devoted to the reading of the names of those who have gained the highest marks in the yearly examinations, and to the giving of the prizes which are displayed on the Communion table and other tables. These consist chiefly of Bibles, Testaments, illustrated books, pictures, pens and pencils, etc., etc., for which our congregation always gives very liberally for their purchase. It may therefore be easily understood that the Sunday School anniversary is "a high day" with our people, both old and young.

I should add here that my dear wife for many years acted as one of the superintendents of Sunday School; and that my daughters, first the eldest and then the youngest, have always taken an active part in the teaching, the latter for several years past having a large class of dear little children, who are taught in a separate building.

In order to keep up the interest of the country congregations in Sunday School work, I arranged for frequent united services for the children at several of our largest village churches, at which I gave addresses about some boy or girl mentioned in the Bible. At these meetings we had usually from three to four hundred children present; and



ANÀLAKÈLY CHURCH, ANTANÀNARÌVO

this kind of service I continued for several years in my district, at least in the nearer part of it. The schools were also examined in the catechisms they were taught on the weekdays; for, notwithstanding modern objections to them, I am a firm believer in the value of catechisms for imparting Scripture facts and doctrines.

Before leaving the subject of Sunday Schools it may be interesting to give here a brief account of an entertainment we arranged a few years ago, chiefly, but not exclusively, for the children of our school; and this had a distinctly missionary object, for we hoped to excite their interest in the spread of the Gospel in the heathen world. About sixty of the scholars, who were to lead the singing, were massed together on and near the central steps of the stone pulpit-platform, the rest of the children occupying the large end gallery. For some time before then we had wished to give the children something to interest them, and it occurred to Mrs. Sibree that we could get up a missionary entertainment, by which a little money could be obtained for our school work, and at the same time the thoughts of the children and of the older people too, would be turned to the great needs of the heathen world, and to the darkness of large portions of their own country. Several English friends promised to assist us with short addresses; our Malagasy friends wrote special hymns, which were adapted to English tunes; dresses were made, and after many practices we announced our entertainment for a Saturday afternoon at 2.30. Long before that time, however, the church was nearly filled, and the audience looking with eager expectation to what they would see and hear; all who entered, except the scholars, paid fivepence or twopence for admission.

My friend Mr. T. Lord presided and gave a brief address, questioning the children about our Lord's last command to His disciples. Then the Rev. J. Peill, whose four sons were all missionaries in China, three of them doctors, spoke about that great empire, and told much about its idolatry, and the faithfulness of many Chinese Christians during the Boxer troubles. To illustrate this address, one of our scholars appeared in Chinese dress, pigtail and all, and excited great interest among the audience. A Chinese woman's shoes, showing the horrible practice of foot-binding, were exhibited, and the country was pointed out on maps on the wall. The address was followed by a hymn on China and its needs, sung to the tune of "The whole wide world for Jesus."

My good friend and colleague at the College, Pastor Rabàry, then brought in an "imitation" African native (really one of the darkest boys in my daughter's Sunday School class), who was dressed in appropriate costume, and a most wild-looking savage he seemed, with his club and barbaric ornaments. (I may say here what we did not tell the Malagasy, that this African's dress and decorations were really all brought the preceding Christmas-time by my eldest son from *Samoa*; but no one was any the wiser!) Then Rabàry described the heathenism of the Dark Continent; and also considerably amused the audience by some absurd gibberish he and his "native" talked together, supposed to be some Central African language. This was followed by a hymn to the tune of "Count your blessings."

Then I went into our vestry and brought up my "Hindu," one of the tallest of my daughter's school lads, and a very stately, dignified figure he made in his long, white dress, red turban and girdle, Braminical cord, and the idol-marks, which I had painted on his forehead with red and white paint. I then gave an address on India and its idolatry; and as I once lived in India for about six months I was able to describe places and people whom I had myself seen, especially dwelling on the great sacrifice many high-caste Hindus have to make if they become Christians. This was followed by a hymn about India, to the tune of "Whosoever will shall shout the sound."

The fourth and last address was given by our Pastor Rakòtovao, who was himself brought up in Southern Madagascar, and spoke about the heathen tribes called Sàkalàva and Bàra. His address was illustrated by a lad dressed in Sàkalàva costume, with a wig of long plaits, and a sash of wooden charms, shells on the forehead, etc. (I may say that I was quite taken in, and thought that our pastor had actually got hold of a real Sàkalàva, so completely did the boy act the character.) Rakòtovao greatly interested the people by telling them some of the curious superstitions of these heathen tribes; and he made an earnest appeal to them to send the Gospel to their ignorant fellow-countrymen.

Then, with a final hymn and prayer, our entertainment concluded, and I hope that our people, old and young, were stirred up to greater interest in mission work, not only in their own country, but also in the great heathen world beyond. This was our chief object in getting up this entertainment, for we believed that by appealing to the people's eyes as well as to their ears a greater impression would be made on their minds. Although to obtain a little money for Sunday School purposes was only a secondary object, about 25 dollars was received for admission.

The Young People's Christian Endeavour movement, commenced many years ago in America and then in England, has been taken up in Madagascar, and is being gradually followed more or less closely in a large number of our Malagasy congregations. On returning from one of my furloughs, in 1883, I found a class of this kind already started in several of the churches in the Capital, including Anàlakèly, and I gladly agreed to the request of our young people to give them systematic Biblical instruction. This I continued to do for a long time every week, and subsequently, as many of them became able to take a more active part, less frequently; and I continued such teaching up to the time of my finally leaving the island thirty-two years afterwards. I went with them through the Acts of the Apostles and several other books of the Bible, and also took such subjects as the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Jews, the Holy Land, Jerusalem, the Tabernacle, the Temple, etc., etc. And for several years past I took as lessons all the chief characters of the Old Testament, just about completing these before leaving in 1915. I felt that the teaching, the warnings, and the guidance shown in the lives and characters of men and women of the ancient Scriptures was most valuable in studying the sacred writings, and bringing them to bear on all times. The meetings of the society which I did not attend were largely conducted by the young people themselves, under the guidance of my daughter and the native pastor. I may add that I felt it a great blessing and help to myself to have this regular study of the characters of the Old Testament Scriptures.

I did my utmost to make this teaching clear and interesting by means of pictures, models, maps, and diagrams, most of these latter prepared by myself; for I always tried to teach by the eye as well as by the ear. In later years I found it desirable to divide the members into two classes, senior and junior, so as to make the teaching more suitable to each division; and I believe that these Christian Endeavour meetings are a very valuable, indeed indispensable, part of our church organization. I also carried on classes of the same kind at several important village centres in my district; besides this, every three or four years came the call to do what I could in this way, as well as in preaching in the districts adjoining my own, when the missionary in charge of one or another of them went home on furlough. I will only add that as we have no exact equivalent in Malagasy for the word "Endeavour," these societies are termed *Fikambànan'ny Kristiana Tanòra*, that is, "Union of Young Christians." Our numbers in attendance vary a good deal, but we have often had from seventy to eighty present. In many villages there are quite as many grown-up people as there are boys and girls in the Christian Endeavour Societies, and we do not feel that they should be discouraged, for many of the adults are but "children of a larger growth."

A few years ago we made a great effort to get such societies established in all the congregations in my district, but the chief difficulty in carrying this out was the lack of suitable and intelligent leaders; and this will still be a hindrance until a more thoroughly trained body of pastors can be provided for the village churches.

Another important church institution in Madagascar is the *Dorcas Society* (Malagasy, *Dorkasy*). The good women of the congregations meet together on an afternoon every week to sew for charitable objects, and to make garments for the poor, or to sell them for their benefit. Often the pastor or the evangelist is helped in this way. In the Antanànarìvo churches, as at the mission stations in the country, the missionary's wife usually attends the Dorcas meeting, superintending the work and conducting a brief devotional service at the close. Good fellowship and friendly feelings are thus promoted among the women, and they are led to care for others who need help.

Since the French conquest of Madagascar and the coming of the French Protestant missionaries, most of whom have in France been accustomed to the use of a liturgy and the *Observance of the Sacred Seasons* of the Christian Year, they have naturally wished to introduce some of these customs among the Malagasy churches. The holding of Good Friday services I have already mentioned as commenced by myself long before the country became a French colony; but since then, " Holy Thursday " and Easter Sunday are being more and more observed as times for special services, especially for a united Communion service of the Antanànarìvo churches on the Thursday afternoon, a custom also now followed by many of the suburban and country congregations. Ascension Day is also observed in some of the churches superintended by the Paris Society's missionaries, this and the other times just mentioned being in my opinion helpful and instructive for the Malagasy Christians, besides bringing them into harmony with the usages of the great majority of other churches.

It need hardly be said that the services held for many years past on *Christmas Day* by every congregation are still continued with unabated interest, almost every church being well attended on that day, collections being made for the poor and for other charitable objects. At my own church, Anàlakèly, our people give very liberally in this way, for several years trying to exceed the amount given in the previous year; so that before I left Madagascar the amount of the Christmas collection reached the handsome sum of above a hundred dollars. After occupying our new building, I always tried to give some floral decoration to the Communion table, by scarlet, white, and golden-coloured flowers. Good Friday is observed by the holding of a large united service in the Capital; but as Friday is the day of the great weekly market in Antanànarìvo, there cannot be as large an attendance then as there always is on Christmas Day.

Another custom which has been introduced among our Malagasy churches for some years past is the observing of the departing hours of the outgoing year, and the first hours of the new year, by special and solemn services. These two occasions are known as *Fanàovam-belòma ny Taona,* "Taking Farewell of the Year," and *Fiàrahabàna ny Taona*, "Welcoming the Year." These observances have apparently originated among the Malagasy themselves, although the people may possibly have heard of such services as the "Watch-night" among the Methodist bodies and other European churches. As missionaries we have, of course, welcomed such opportunities of impressing upon our native friends the value and the transitory nature of time, and the duty of fresh consecration to God as a new period of time dawns on them, and also thanksgiving for the mercies of the past.

As the number of suitable and trained men fitted to act as leaders of the native churches has gradually increased, chiefly, of course, of those coming from our College, the *Ordination of Pastors* has become more frequent, and considerable interest is always aroused in such services. We have endeavoured to give due solemnity to those occasions, and in most respects we follow the usages of the Congregational churches. Appropriate Scripture lessons are read, giving the scriptural qualifications for the pastoral office; several questions are put to the candidate as to the reasons he has for undertaking such responsibilities, and as to his belief that he is divinely called to the Christian ministry; solemn prayer is offered for him, accompanied sometimes by the apostolic custom of "the laying on of hands"; a "charge," or faithful admonition and encouragement as to the duties of a pastor and preacher, is addressed to him; and, finally, the congregation whom he is to teach and guide is instructed and urged as to *their* duties towards their new pastor.

In addition to these most important parts of the service, a brief account of the reasons which led to the candidate being called by that congregation is generally given by some influential member of the church. And then, for some years past, it has always been the custom to give the pastor a handsomely bound Bible and Hymn-book; while during later years other books have frequently been given, some from the Sunday School, some from the Christian Endeavourers, and some from private individuals, and often from neighbouring churches. In recent years this presentation of books and other things increased to such an extent, and thus afforded to people who had no claim to take part in such a service opportunities to talk, sometimes lengthily

—that it became a nuisance and a serious abuse, much detracting from the solemnity we wished to give to an ordination service. We were therefore at length obliged to allow only the usual gifts of Bible and Hymn-books to be spoken of, and then merely mention the other presents laid on the Communion table, together with the names of the givers.

A very popular occasion among our native churches is the yearly *Harvest Festival*, or, as it is commonly termed, the *Vòkatra* service, a word meaning " fruit " or " produce." And notwithstanding the existence of the old Malagasy customs and times of meeting together mentioned in the first paragraph of this chapter, the people generally have little to vary the monotony of their daily life, especially those who live in the scattered villages and homesteads. The preparation of their rice-fields, the planting and transplanting of the rice, the cutting of the crop at harvest-time and storing it in the rice-pits—these, together with the cultivation of a few vegetables, and the rearing of ducks and fowls, occupy the greater portion of their time and are the chief subjects of their thoughts and their daily talk.

Into this somewhat grey and dull existence the proclamation of the Gospel has come, awakening hopes which not only stretch out beyond the present into the future life, but do much also to brighten the " life that now is," and to introduce other ideas, broader and more varied than those with which their ancestors were familiar. It may be truly said that the School and the Church are the great influences which tend to expand the minds of the Malagasy, and which bring in their train many other things as a pleasant variety into their otherwise rather sombre lives.

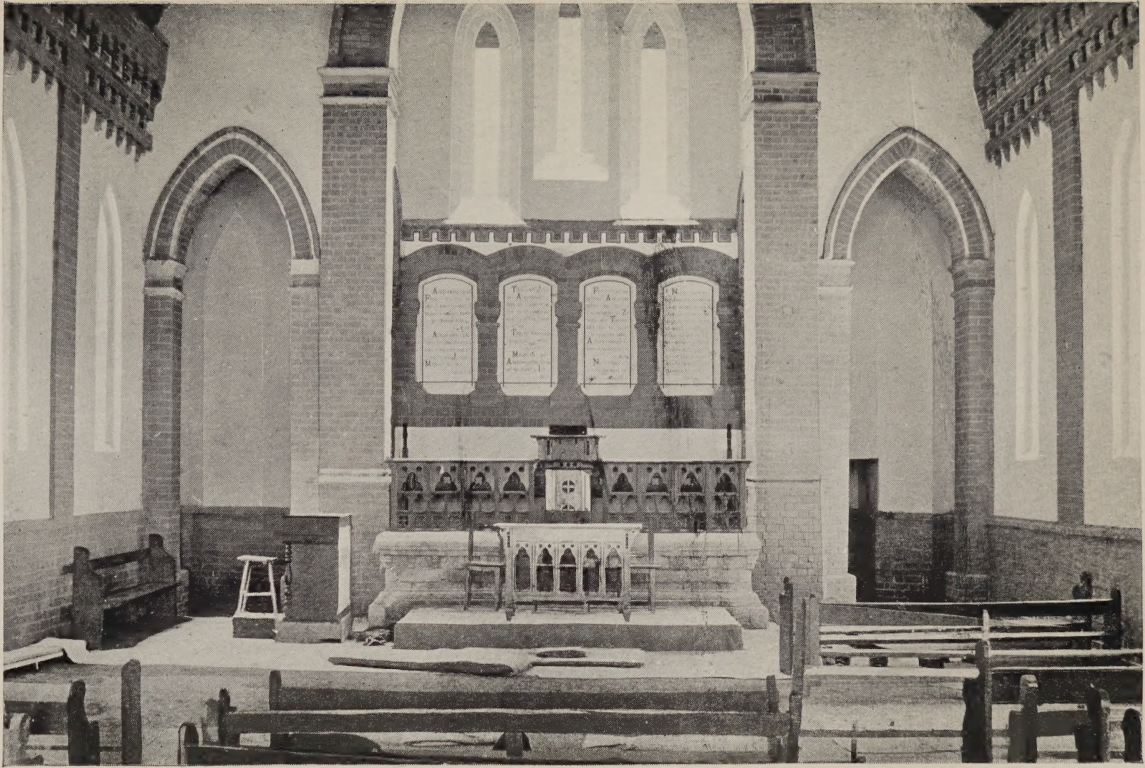
Staying some years ago for a few days' change and rest at my old station of Ambòhimànga, and doing something to supply the place of the resident missionary, then on furlough, I was called upon to preach at and take part in two Harvest Festivals. One Saturday morning I walked to a village a mile and a half distant, and found it was quite a gala day there. Numbers of people were outside the little chapel, as well as inside, and mats were spread near the doors, so that those unable to get inside might hear something of the service. This, in itself, differed but little from our usual order, except that all the pastors present took some part. Several new tunes had been learnt, and I preached from an appropriate text.

But the offerings at the service gave it a special character. Most of these could be seen, as they were placed in different parts of the building, or arranged outside. A list of these was read before the conclusion of the service, from which I noted down the following items :

First and foremost came the rice, unhusked, of which there was an immense heap, amounting to more than fifty measures, together with a smaller heap of white rice. Outside the chapel was a large quantity of manioc-root, which is largely used for food ; and close by were twelve great loads of firewood. Then there were large bunches of bananas, a basket of earth-nuts, an immense pumpkin, baskets of yams, pineapples, lemons, eggs, a bottle of milk, a large rush mat, a fowl, a rabbit, two lace collars, which were pinned on the wall so as to show their patterns ; lastly, there were 1,750 cigars, cigar-making being a staple manufacture of the neighbourhood.

Besides all these offerings in kind, the money gifts amounted to just 40 dollars, which, considering that to a Malagasy peasant a dollar was then nearly as much as a pound would be to an English countryman, I thought a very liberal contribution. After the service the articles were sold for the benefit of the church funds. The money realized at such services is used chiefly for paying the salary of the teacher of the day school, in giving some help to the pastor, and for various other church expenses.

I afterwards took part in another *Vòkatra* service in a village church to the south-west of the Capital, and here a good deal more was done in the way of decorating the building. Banana trees were fixed at the corners of the pulpit platform, so that their large handsome leaves spread over the pulpit like arches. To these were fixed huge bunches of their own fruit, fifty or sixty in number, as well as lemons ; but together with these there were other things not usually found growing on trees—printed cotton handkerchiefs, a great ball of sewing cotton, and a parasol ! Along the platform railing, stalks of *ampèmby*, a kind of millet, were fixed, as well as fruit and wild flowers. On the window-sills



INTERIOR OF VILLAGE CHURCH, AMBÒHIDRATRÌMO, IMÈRINA

enormous pumpkins were arranged, while from the chief timbers of the roof immense roots of manioc were suspended, looking like small trees. Little tricolour flags were largely in evidence, and the four corners of the church were adorned with huge stalks of sugar-cane. On one side of the pulpit was a great heap of sweet potatoes, and another of manioc-root; all these things, of course, were in addition to the indispensable rice, which was heaped up in one corner.

While speaking of church decoration, I never saw anything in Madagascar so good, as well as in such excellent taste, as at a village chapel close to the forest, and not far from the mission sanatorium, where we were spending a short holiday a few years ago. This was at Christmas-time (our summer in Madagascar), and the little building was elaborately adorned with strings of the berries and buds of the wild flowers and the trees growing in the neighbouring woods. There was a wonderful variety of these; most of them were of brilliant colours, and they were arranged in such a way and in such quantity as to form a most effective decoration. Many kinds of bright blossoms from the numerous flowering trees in the forests were also used in adorning the pulpit and the platform, and great use was made of the very beautiful and graceful fronds of the bamboo-palm. The whole was more striking in its general effect than anything I had ever seen before, and it was designed and carried out entirely by the Malagasy themselves.

Our people are appreciating more the beautiful and the fitting in their churches. Not only are the buildings and their furniture often very creditable to their skill and taste, but they like also to ornament them with flowers and plants. They are becoming more sensible of the wonders of God's handiwork, feeling that His beautiful works may well be used to adorn the houses in which they worship the Maker of all.

CHAPTER IX

CHURCH SYSTEM AND GOVERNMENT; AND SECTS AND PARTIES IN THE MALAGASY CHURCH

It has already been noticed (in Chapter IV) that one of the valuable services rendered by the Rev. W. Ellis to the Malagasy Christians, soon after the re-opening of Madagascar to religious teaching and worship, was to lead the native congregations to adopt Scriptural methods of self-government by choosing pastors and deacons to serve their brethren, and not allowing self-chosen people to constitute themselves leaders and rulers over the others. Happily, these principles have never been departed from, although there have been times when there was some danger of the Government interfering in religious matters and attempting to rule the churches. But thanks to our teaching and influence, both the Queen and the Prime Minister were led to announce again and again, in the most public fashion, that they had no wish or intention to rule the churches, but that perfect religious liberty was guaranteed to all the people.

There was a time when the missionaries of the L.M.S. in Madagascar were repeatedly accused by "Church Defence" lecturers in England of forming a State Church among the Malagasy, of which those missionaries were the favoured teachers. It was quite true that two queens, Rànavàlona II and her successor, were members of a Congregational church in the Palace Yard, and that the Prime Minister was for some time the secretary of that church; but neither of these facts, unusual as they were, were inconsistent with Congregational principles. So it may be confidently affirmed that we were not traitors to our beliefs and our traditions. Instead of scheming to set up or to encourage State Churchism, it was owing to our presence and influence that a State Church was not established in Madagascar.

For a few years after the re-establishment of the mission (in 1862), the work of teaching and training the congregations in the Capital and its neighbourhood went steadily forward ; but with the burning of the national and tribal idols in the central provinces in 1869, and the acceptance of Christianity by the Queen and the principal people of the country, came such important developments of the work, that fresh church arrangements became necessary in order to cope with the new situation. Congregations had gathered together in every important village in the central provinces, as well as wherever Hova and Governmental influence extended throughout the island ; and crowds of ignorant people met together on Sundays, often without any one competent to lead or instruct them in the new religion. Something, in fact a great deal, had to be done for the simplest elementary instruction of these people in the truths of Christianity. The churches of the Capital therefore sent out a number of their members to teach in the villages of the central province and thus supply somewhat the pressing needs of the time, until trained evangelists and pastors could be appointed. But these had first to be found and then had to be trained, so in 1869 the L.M.S. College was commenced.

In that same year also, a Union of the Protestant Churches of Imèrina (all of them *then* in connection with the L.M.S.) was formed, and the congregations of Antanànarìvo, of which there were nine, became "mother churches" of a number of village congregations surrounding the Capital, and in many instances stretching away from it for several days' journey in all directions. Thus, the villages to be "mothered" by the most easterly one of the city churches extended as far as to the sea coast, which was at that time eight or nine days' journey distant. The country congregations then numbered over four hundred, so that each city, or "mother church" had, on an average, nearly fifty of these "offspring churches" to help as far as was possible. At that date there was no mission station away from the Capital, the first one—at Ambòhimànga—being formed in

1870; but as these stations, with a resident missionary, were gradually established, the too large districts of several of the city churches were eventually reduced in size.

It will be seen therefore that L.M.S. missionaries necessarily became a kind of bishop, and had to cease being, as they were for the first few years, pastors of the large city churches and the nearer villages, and had each to superintend an extensive district, involving much itineration and the visitation of a number of country congregations. The native pastors of the churches in Antanànarìvo also became very important and influential personages in the church system which was gradually evolved; and it may be added, that this influence was, on the whole, wisely and judiciously exerted, although it had its dangers and possible abuses.

At the first meeting of the Malagasy Congregational Union, some half-dozen resolutions were carefully discussed and agreed to. These referred to: (1) The choosing of pastors; (2) the deposition of those manifestly unfit for the office of pastor, or preacher, or deacon; (3) the disclaimer of the "mother churches" of any right to appoint church officers in the village congregations; (4) the freedom of the churches from any government interference or control; (5) cautions respecting strangers coming to preach in the country; and (6) as to evil practices which had already appeared in the singing of many congregations, especially in the villages. From that time—fifty-three years ago—up to the present day, this Church Union has been known by the name of *Isan-ènim-bòlana,* that is, "Every-six-months," from the period of its meetings; and these have continued to be held regularly at these intervals, without any interruption from political or other changes, during the entire half century.

With a wise breadth of view on the part of its founders, the London Missionary Society has always been most liberal and catholic-spirited in allowing perfect freedom of action with regard to church order and government in the churches formed by its missionaries.[1] And although the great majority of its agents in the foreign field come from Congregational churches, they are not obliged to form Independent churches in heathen lands, if they see that other forms of church order are more suitable for the people they teach. And so it has been in Madagascar: we have not Independency pure and simple, for we know well that this would not be beneficial for the great majority of Malagasy congregations. Our church system has rather a strong element of Presbyterianism, together with—as already noted—a decided admixture of Episcopacy. I believe we have, almost unconsciously, solved the problem of combining the benefits of each system without including their weak points or deficiencies.

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[1] See its "Fundamental Principle": "Its design is not to send Presbyterianism, Independency, Episcopacy, or any other form of Church Order or Government, but the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, to the heathen, and that it shall be left (as it ought to be left) to the minds of the persons whom God may call into the fellowship of His Son from among them to assume

The great "Six-Monthly" assemblies of the Imèrina churches just mentioned are the apex, so to speak, of our church system, but there are steps leading up to it of which something must be said. Each mission district, with its forty or fifty village congregations, is generally divided into two or three groups of neighbouring churches, who meet together through their representatives every four months, and are known as the *Isan-èfa-bòlana* ("Every-four-months"). The important work done by these meetings must be described presently a little more fully. These "Four-Monthly" meetings are parts of the mission "district" to which they belong; and since the French conquest of Madagascar (1895) and the continued union of the congregations now superintended by French Protestant missionaries with the "Six-Monthly" assembly (*Isan-ènim-bòlana*), it has been found advisable to form yet another union of the L.M.S. churches only, which is styled the "Yearly Meeting" or *Isan-kèrin-tàona.* This became necessary for the business of our own congregations, since the "Six-Monthly" assembly is joined in by those under the care of the Friends' Mission, as well as by those of the French Protestants. Put in regular sequence, therefore, our scheme of Church order runs thus: Church Meeting; Four-Monthly Meeting; Mission District; Yearly Meeting; Every-Six-Months' Assembly.

All the churches of the three missions in the province

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for themselves such form of Church Government as to them shall appear most agreeable to the Word of God."

of Imèrina, over 900 in number, by their pastors, evangelists, and delegates, therefore meet together in large assemblies at the Capital every April and October. At these meetings papers are read and full discussions follow, upon all kinds of subjects connected with church work and worship, discipline and institutions, on the duties of church officers and members, on money and giving, on social questions, on family life, on Protestant principles, on literature, books and reading, on Christian doctrine, on Bible study and circulation, and on numerous other important points which are constantly arising among our people. These frequent conferences and free debates upon such varied subjects have undoubtedly greatly promoted the advance and enlightenment of the Malagasy Christians. Wise methods of carrying on church work have been initiated; abuses arising from ignorance have been prevented or corrected; united action has been secured; and a real brotherhood among the churches has been established.

By it the strong have helped the weak; the wiser have instructed the more ignorant; and the older-formed congregations have fostered the newly gathered and inexperienced ones. This union of congregations—call it modified Presbyterianism, or federated Independency, or limited Episcopacy, or what you will—has certainly been a great blessing to the Malagasy churches, especially in their present stage of development. During the first few years of the existence of the Imèrina Union, a number of resolutions were agreed to, enjoining uniform practice with regard to discipline, the instruction of catechumeus, church membership, preachers' qualifications, etc.; but these it was always carefully noted, were not *commands*, but only *advice*. Still, they have been almost universally followed, and their influence has been most salutary. And it should be remembered that this Church system was no cut-and-dried plan of the English missionaries, or urged upon the Malagasy by ourselves. It has been a gradual growth, an evolution, which has come about simply from the necessities of the case, and as the needs of the churches have suggested fresh plans of action. It has, therefore, a healthy vigour of life about it and will most probably be a permanent institution. The Malagasy churches are jealous of too much interference with their liberty, and have several times shown that they are resolved to maintain popular control and to prevent any church or church officers from becoming lords over them.

If it be asked, how is discipline maintained, and compliance with the various regulations passed by the different unions enforced? the reply is, that in several instances churches and individuals who have persistently disregarded remonstrance and warning from the bodies with which they have been united, have at length been solemnly and formally excommunicated and left to themselves. In almost every case, however, after a longer or shorter period of isolation, the offending church or persons have humbly sought readmission to union with their brethren, after promise of amendment and reformation of manners.

In the year 1873 an important advance was made in the work of the "Six-Monthly Meeting," for the native churches were stirred up to undertake evangelistic work in the extensive and still heathen districts of their own great island, and so the Church Union became also a missionary society. Two unsuccessful attempts were made to place teachers in certain of the southern provinces; but, owing largely to suspicion that these messengers were really political agents of the Hova Government, they were eventually obliged to return home. But the Union persevered in its efforts, and in 1878 it succeeded in placing evangelists in several important positions; and from that time to the present the Union has maintained a number of men—from twelve to seventeen in number—and their wives, as pioneer missionaries in the heathen districts. In later years these mission stations have been confined to the northern half of the island, since the Bétsiléo Church Union has also taken up mission work in the southern provinces.

At the Six-Monthly meetings, one or more of the native missionaries, returning home on furlough, is generally present and gives an account of his work, together with facts and figures as to his congregations and schools, etc.; and if he has the ability to describe that work in an attractive fashion, he is frequently asked to speak in some of the larger city churches, and is thus able to stimulate, as a missionary "deputation," the interest and zeal of the congregations in aggressive evangelistic efforts among the heathen Malagasy.

These half-yearly gatherings have become more and more popular and largely attended every year as time goes on, and larger numbers of the country congregations come up to take part in them. In 1887 another forward step was taken by commencing meetings for the women; these are generally, but not exclusively, conducted by the missionary ladies, and addresses are delivered both by European and Malagasy women. At first, and for a few years, *one* church was sufficiently large for these women's meetings, but for some years past it has been necessary to arrange for meetings in two churches. Later on, a meeting for boys and another for girls, have also been arranged, so that on the second Thursday mornings in April and in October, five large assemblies—including the men's meeting—are being held in the most spacious of the city churches. This last-named assembly is always an uncomfortably crowded one, for our largest church is not spacious enough to accommodate all the delegates, and there are always a number of people at each of the three doorways of the Ampàmarìnana church unable to get even standing room in the building.

The meetings of the *Isan-ènim-bòlana* commence, however, on the preceding Wednesday afternoon by preaching services in several of the largest churches of Antanànarìvo. At first *one* building was sufficient, then *two* became necessary, then *three*, and now, generally *four* services have to be arranged for, and these four churches are generally packed.

After the Thursday morning meetings, the delegates from the country places are provided with a substantial dinner by their "mother church" in the church building, as many as 400 to 500 people being thus generously entertained at each city church. Then the representatives of each country congregation bring their half-yearly contributions to the funds of the Union for the support of the native evangelists who are their messengers to the heathen tribes.

It will be seen therefore that the "Six-Monthly Meeting" is a very important and valuable element in the church life and organization of the Malagasy Christians.

A few words must be said about the "Four-Monthly Meeting" (*Isan-èfa-bòlana*), which, during the last quarter-century, has become a very prominent institution. To show its working, a brief description may be given of the one in the southern half of my own district, Anàlakèly; and this may be done without any egotism, since the completeness and success of its working is largely due to the admirable business qualities of a good man, one of our church members, who was its secretary for several years; and I think I may say that in no mission district has this meeting been better managed than in our own.

These "Four-Monthly-Meetings" are held in rotation among the dozen or so of the village churches included in the sub-district, the place being chosen at the preceding meeting, together with the subject to be discussed, and the speaker who is to introduce it. After a brief devotional service, the number of delegates present from each village is recorded and compared with those attending the previous meeting. But before the address and discussion, a number of questions are put to the delegates of each church as to the Sunday School attendance, the number of scholars and of the teachers; the attendance at the day school (in the three or four villages which have still retained such a school); the number of members of the Christian Endeavour Society; the money collected during the past four months, its expenditure, and the balance in hand; whether the amount guaranteed for the support of the pastor, or evangelist, or teacher has been duly paid to him; and people are not allowed to give vague and indefinite replies, but are pressed to say exactly how much, in case anything is wanting, and their promises have been unfulfilled. The effect of all this is excellent, and keeps each village church up to the mark by the knowledge that its work is constantly open to inspection by its sister churches, and is subject to praise or censure as may be fitting in each case.

If any new church is being built—as has been the case almost always somewhere of late years—inquiries are made as to its progress. If a new pastor has been chosen, his name must be submitted for consideration and approval during four months, and then reported to the following meeting; and he is not recognized as such until his election has been sanctioned by the Four-Monthly meeting, which also appoints delegates to represent it at his ordination. It is the same with new preachers and deacons and deaconesses, their names also must be submitted for approval by the meeting; and they are not considered as properly appointed until the following meeting confirms the choice of the church whom they are to serve. The subjects for addresses and discussion are as varied and as useful as those considered by the General Assembly every six months. Should any difficult questions arise as to discipline, such, for instance, as a church being overawed by rich and influential individuals, etc., a sub-committee is appointed to meet with the people in question, and by moral suasion and tact to endeavour to settle such difficulty by suitable action. The meeting is concluded by a substantial meal of the invariable rice and stewed beef, and fruit, etc., provided in very generous fashion by the church where the meeting takes place.

It will be seen, I think, that the value of such gatherings is very great, and that they form a most important part of Malagasy church organization.

About nine years ago a small sub-committee, of which I was one, devoted much time and consideration to the preparation of a "Constitution," or set of rules for the governing and guidance of the native churches. It was a lengthy business to compile these; it was difficult to get them passed by the Mission Committee, and a still more difficult task to bring the Malagasy committees to agree to them, so that it was many months before they were fully accepted and came into operation. But it was a wise and right thing to do, not only for the help of the Malagasy churches, but also because we were at length able to show clearly to the French Government what our principles and our policy was in the conduct of our church life and order.

The preceding part of this chapter has given examples of some of "the lights" of church life in Madagascar; the following pages will dwell more on examples of some of its "shadows," not unmixed, however, with gleams of brightness.

In churches with so large an amount of freedom as that possessed by the Malagasy Christians, it is not surprising that an unruly spirit occasionally appears. The most serious instance of evil prevailing for a time—indeed for a long time—occurred in the year 1893, when we as a committee were obliged to take action and use strong measures. In the Memorial Church of Ambàtonakànga the pastor, a young man who had for long borne an excellent character and was a good preacher, appeared to have been gradually overcome by temptation and had fallen into gross sin. This, of course, became known, and first the missionary in charge, and then we as a committee, did our utmost to induce the church members to do what was right and remove the pastor from his position, after having begged him voluntarily to retire. This he at first agreed to do, and the church members also promised to do as we urged upon them. But a number of the people encouraged him to remain, and professed ignorance of what everyone knew. As the affair had become a public scandal, and all our efforts were fruitless, we saw no other course open to us than to close the building; and as chairman of the Committee that year it fell to me to announce this decision to the congregation. I was accompanied by Mr. Baron, as secretary of the Committee; he conducted the devotional part of the service, and I preached, but it was a painful and trying ordeal from the frequent interruptions made by some of those present. Then we made known the decision of the Committee. It was Sacrament Sunday, but we felt it would be a profanation to have such a service after the disturbances already made, and we dismissed the congregation.

On the following Thursday morning, Mr. Baron and I closed the church and took possession of the keys, fixing notices to that effect inside and outside the building, explaining briefly why this was done. We also wrote to the church members, recounting the circumstances which had occurred, and informing them that the church would not be open for service on the following Sunday. This action caused great excitement and anger on the part of the unruly section of the congregation; and on the Sunday morning they held an indignation meeting in the ground surrounding the church. We also announced that we considered the former church membership to have become null and void, and that after a time a new church would be formed from those thought worthy to be chosen as its members.

As the Queen was considered, in the terms of the Anglo-Malagasy treaty, as guardian of the four Memorial Churches, we informed her Majesty of what we had done; and she made some attempts to get the pastor to retire, but without success. Then she asked us to re-open the church on the following Sunday; and as we had maintained our right to close it, if we thought it necessary to do so, we agreed to her request.

The Ambàtonakànga church was thus freed from a number of the most objectionable persons who had supported the pastor in his misconduct; but the result also was that more than a third of the people left and formed a new congregation. They secured a piece of ground not far from the Memorial Church and erected a rush structure, which was for long known as the *Tràno Zozòro*, or "Rush House." Later on, they erected a brick building at some distance, and this was called the *Tràno Birìky*, or "Brick House," and for several years they remained isolated from all the other churches, although they induced two or three village congregations to join them, and formed a sort of Union among themselves. Eventually, as the older people died off, and the younger ones felt their isolation from the mass of their brethren, overtures were made for reconciliation and reunion; and in 1913 their church was taken under the care of the Friends' Mission, and became their representative church in the Capital. The building was greatly enlarged, and a good congregation meets there, with a most excellent man as its pastor.[1] Of course this serious secession greatly weakened the mother church, but it gradually recovered; a larger congregation than before meets within its walls, and for many years it has again been one of the largest and most influential churches in the Capital.

In the year 1904 there was a religious Revival in the

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[1] To the sorrow of all who knew him, this good man, Rakôtonirainy, has recently died.

Bétsiléo and neighbouring provinces ; a breath of the Divine Spirit which had so greatly stirred Wales not long before then seemed to reach Madagascar ; and our brethren in the south had to rejoice in considerable numbers of people who had been brought to confess sin and seek salvation, and also in the increased earnestness and zeal of many who were already professing Christians.

Together with these encouraging signs of God's presence came also certain extravagances and blemishes. In some these took the form of dreaming wonderful dreams and seeing visions. A number of people took the name of "The Apostles," and went about preaching, professing to cure disease by faith and the laying on of hands, and to cast out devils by prayer and invocations. Careful inquiry, however, seemed to show that while in the case of purely nervous disorders some good was undoubtedly done by such means, there was no evidence that any organic disease was cured by them. A missionary in the Bétsiléo province, who viewed the movement with favour, said that he was quite satisfied that the "Apostles" did not prove their claims to any such power. He had never seen them heal a single person, though he had often seen them attempt to do so ; at the same time, he had seen several persons who stated that they had been healed by the laying on of hands.

With regard to their professed ability "to cast out devils," a claim difficult to prove or disprove, this excited the imagination of a naturally superstitious people like the Malagasy, and made them run after those who were thought able to exert such extraordinary powers. Some persons also joined them who were actuated by unworthy motives and greed of money ; these went about speaking very lightly of European missionaries, and asking money fees for laying on of hands for healing purposes.

Apart from these abuses, there seems little doubt that many of these "Apostles," if not the majority of them, were really earnest Christians wishing to do good, and were actuated by disinterested motives. They went about preaching the Gospel, and in many places were doubtless the means of stirring up the people to seek salvation. In the Bétsiléo province and in the district to the north of it, a part of the island occupied chiefly by the Norwegian

Lutheran Mission, the missionaries spoke strongly in favour of the "Apostles," and affirmed that the movement had been a great blessing to their people. The weak points of their belief had become less prominent, and their efforts had become more in the line of preaching and speaking to the people one by one; although their claim to supernatural powers had, in Imèrina, aroused prejudice and prevented co-operation with the majority of the churches.

Another band of Malagasy Christians called themselves "Disciples of the Lord" (*Mpiànatry ny Tòmpo*), and followed in many respects the practices of the so-called "Apostles." Some good doubtless came from the work of these people, many of whom, although mistaken in some points, seem to have been true and earnest believers. But another sect, who called themselves "Children of the Bible" (*Zànaky ny Baìboly*), showed how little they understood the real teaching of the Scriptures, for they took forcible possession of one of the smaller city churches; and it was many months before they were dispossessed by the strong arm of the law, and the lawful owners of the building were restored to their rights. In this and in other ways the tares have been mingled with the wheat, and what the great enemy has been unable to destroy he has adulterated with false teaching and evil practices.[1]

Another example of the "shadows" of church life in Madagascar may be given from my own experience. Before the French conquest there appeared in Antanànarìvo several small congregations, meeting generally in rush buildings known as *Fiangònan-karìva*, that is, "Evening assemblies," because at first it was only in the afternoon of the Sunday that these meetings were held, and thus, of course, weakening the already numerous and long-established congregations of the city. Besides this, a spirit of separation and of self-will was fostered among their adherents, and a desire to be free from all control and from the rules followed by the churches. These irregular gatherings delighted in the style of singing led by a few people, but quite unknown to most of those present; so the praise portion of the service became a mere performance, and not worship. Most of the city pastors were quite of one mind with the missionaries in discouraging this style of praise, and especially the spirit of separation seen in these afternoon conventicles.

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[1] The congregation which met in the "Rush House" (see p. 172) also called themselves "Children of the Bible."

Among these *fiangònan-kariva* there was one situated in a quarter called Ambòndrona, which, had it been regularly established, would have been in our Anàlakèly district, and was not ten minutes' walk from my own house. This congregation, like two or three others in the Capital, was chiefly composed of freed slaves, or, as they began to style themselves, *Hova vao*, that is, "new Hova," to show that they were now quite the equals of those who had been their masters and owners. The leaders of this place often asked me and others of our people to go and preach to them; and at length they requested to become "a child" of Anàlakèly; and as we thought that, on the whole, it might be best to recognize them, we agreed to this, and one of our deacons was chosen to be their pastor; their church's name was put on our preachers' plan, and we sent them preachers regularly to conduct their services; but he soon had difficulties with an unruly element in the congregation, and the pastor of the mother church and I were often called in to try and arrange matters, and endeavour to prevent the frequent disturbances which occurred. At length we felt obliged to suggest to the church members that several of the chief offenders should be excluded from their fellowship, and by a large majority of those present this was done.

On the first Sunday of August 1910, when I went there to preach and conduct the Communion service, a number of malcontents, who were still members, would not join in it; but as soon as I had concluded the service they, led by the excluded members, commenced a Communion of their own at the other end of the church. The pastor and I made a quiet but strong protest against this lawless proceeding, as a breach of Christian unity and church life, but we did nothing further and merely sat quietly on the pulpit platform and watched their proceedings. They had brought with them, we noticed, a basket containing some plates of bread, a tall glass or two, with a bottle of some kind of wine; but they made no attempt to possess themselves of the handsome silver-plated Communion service with which we and the great majority of the members had celebrated the Sacrament.

Things grew no better, but worse, as time went on; and from the lawless conduct of an unruly minority there was, once or twice, actual fighting in the church, and some of the forms were broken. The police had to interfere, and on one Sunday the building was closed by order of the Mayor of Antanànarìvo. He, however, allowed it to be reopened; but for several weeks half a dozen policemen were stationed in and outside the building to prevent any more disturbance. As the pastor had died, the quiet and orderly majority of the members requested me to undertake to provide for all the services for a time, none of the people themselves taking any part whatever.

I accordingly obtained help from my missionary brethren and the city pastors for the Sunday services, and gave regular Bible teaching every week, and for many months carried this on. I had to act as treasurer and also as secretary, keeping all church accounts and records; indeed, at the Communion services I had to be not only *pastor*, but *deacon* also, taking round the sacred elements to the people. But I received most kind and valuable help from my good friend, Mrs. Sharman, who undertook the whole management of the Sunday School during all those difficult and trying months. Bringing several of the students of the College with her, she arranged the scholars, old and young, in graded classes, and for a considerable time she was there with her helpers every Sunday, so that never before was the school so well arranged and taught. I owed much also to the students, who not only taught in the school, but often supplied the lack of preachers.

These arrangements went on for nearly two years, and the great majority of the Ambòndrona people, quiet and well-disposed folks, were much troubled and ashamed of the conduct of some of their companions. At length I thought the time had come when deacons should be elected. This was done, and sixteen men and sixteen women were chosen, and from them again two secretaries, two treasurers and two auditors were appointed. Some time afterwards one of my students at the College, who had an excellent wife, was chosen by the church as the pastor, and I was relieved of most of the burden I had borne for a long time past, and there was a period of apparent peace and harmony for some months. But the unruly element broke out afresh early in 1915, for on the afternoon of Sunday, January 10th, I was interrupted in attempting to carry on the service, and by some of the singers getting possession of the harmonium, they commenced singing something quite different from what I had given out, and then they prevented me from reading the Scriptures or offering prayer. I therefore appealed to the quiet and orderly portion of the congregation, who were the large majority of those present, and asked them to accompany me to the Fàravòhitra Memorial Church, of which I then had charge. About 120 people, including the pastor and chief members of the church, therefore, went with me up the hill, and joined the assembly there, to whom I preached, and afterwards distributed the prizes given to the scholars in the Sunday School for their success in the yearly examination. These disturbances at length led to some of the chief breakers of the peace being summoned to the police court and reprimanded and warned as to their conduct. I fear, however, that my young friend the pastor has had a not very enviable position since I left the country.

Such are some of the darker and less encouraging aspects of church life among the Malagasy. But, in justice to my native friends, I may say that my experience at Ambòndrona was a very exceptional one, and that the great majority of the Christian congregations in Madagascar are as law-abiding and as well-behaved and reverent as we can desire.

CHAPTER X

CHRISTIAN LIFE AMONG THE MALAGASY: ITS REALITY AND PROOFS

A GOOD deal has been said in the preceding chapters about Church Organization and Church Divisions in Madagascar, and some readers may be disposed to ask if the outward machinery has worked together with real change of life and character among the people to whom the Gospel has been preached.

In reply to such a question, I think that the fidelity and courage shown by considerable numbers of the first Malagasy converts is a sufficient proof that the early proclamation of Christianity in the island was followed by unmistakable results. Not only did about two hundred native Christians suffer death in various cruel forms during the quarter-century which succeeded the fifteen years of planting the new religion, but hundreds of others endured bonds and imprisonment, fines and degradation, slavery and shame for the sake of the Gospel. Very clear and distinct testimony to the character and consistent life of these confessors is given in accounts written by the first missionaries, as well as regards their enlightened and intelligent faith. Of these accounts a few examples may be here given.

On my return home from Madagascar for my first furlough in 1867, I received a letter from Mrs. Johns, widow of one of the first missionaries to the island, in which she said of Rabòdo, one of her pupils, who afterwards died in heavy chains for Christ's sake: "She was the first in my Bible-class, and her growth in the knowledge and love of the Scriptures often astonished me. I had been accustomed from early age to teach a class of young women and girls in Wales; but none of these, however attentive, appeared to have so clear an understanding of Divine truth as my friends in Madagascar. So that I could not fail to see that they were taught by a higher Teacher." And so it was with many of those who became eminent members of the martyr Church.

Mr. Ellis, writing about a well-known Christian Malagasy, who had borne heavy fetters for several years, and whose father and sisters had died in chains, said of some of these surviving sufferers that they were, in consequence, "helpless, emaciated, with scars and wounds in their flesh, but with peace, hope, joy, glory in their souls. I never heard from them any vindictive feeling or of any wish for evil to come to those who had inflicted all this torture upon them. They might have avoided all this suffering if they would have renounced the name of Jesus Christ, and they would have been clothed with honour and raised to distinction. At any period of their life, at any hour, they might, on these conditions, have been instantly relieved; but they refused relief at such a price. They suffered on and on, month after month, and year after year, until death brought them deliverance." These and many other testimonies might be cited to show the forgiving spirit always characteristic of the early Malagasy Christians.

Courage and fidelity to what the native believers felt to be God's truth was a marked feature of their conduct in time of persecution. Although it was with difficulty and risk of punishment that they continued to worship, they constantly met together to listen to words of instruction and encouragement, to sing the praise of the Divine Redeemer, and to draw near to their Father in prayer. These simple services were sometimes held on a bare mountain-side, where a watch could be set to warn them of any possible informer, or in a cave, or in the remote and dense forest. I was myself told how they used to meet together in the house of one of their number, generally at midnight on a Sunday evening; and how they were glad when it was a stormy and wet night, so that they could sing aloud without much fear of being overheard; while, on the other hand, on a still and calm night, they only dared to sing under their breath, lest their praise should betray them to their enemies. At Ilàfy, an important village in my own district, I was one Sunday, after the morning service, dining with the good native pastor, an old Christian who had suffered in the persecution, and while talking with him about those difficult times, he said: "Would you like to see where we used to worship 'when the land was dark?'" "Indeed I should," I replied. So he moved away the table, cleared off the mat covering the earthen floor, and pulled up a small trap-door. Here were several steep steps cut out of the hard red clay and leading down to a small chamber hollowed out of the ground. "Here," he said, "we used to meet to pray in those times, often in fear and trembling." And in such ways did those faithful men and women help each other to hold on and endure hardness for the sake of the Gospel.

Near Ambòhimànga, my old station, there is a group of two or three prominent hills to the east of the town. On the summit of one of them was an old village, now long deserted but surrounded, like so many ancient towns in Imèrina, with two or three deep fosses for its defence. In the side of one of these is a small cave, where I could hardly stand upright, and not large enough for more than twenty people to meet in. This was the place where a few Ambòhimànga Christians used frequently to come together to worship God and to encourage one another to hold fast their faith.

Belief in the power of prayer was also a distinguishing mark of the early Malagasy Christians. A kind of prayer was not unusual in their old idolatry, for on great public occasions invocations were made to the royal ancestors, to the chief idols, to "the twelve mountains," as well as to a supreme Being under the names of Andrìamànitra and Andrìanànahàry (see Chapter III). But such prayers were rare things, practices only employed at certain times and on solemn occasions, especially in times of war and of difficulty and distress.

I remember at the time of the second Franco-Malagasy War how, as the foreign troops were slowly advancing up the country from the north-west, the native women at each village used to gather together morning and evening, and with spears in their hands and passion in their voices, send up their prayer-songs, or *ràry*, to God, praying for the protection of their fathers and husbands, brothers and sons, against their invaders, somewhat in this fashion:

> Protect Thou them, O great Spirit;
> May the spear have no power to wound them;
> May the rifle-bullets do them no harm;
> May they conquer their enemies!
> Whether they fight by night or by day,
> May they be helped to defeat our foes!

Still, such prayer, and all Malagasy prayer in former times, was spasmodic and occasional, not an habitual practice, very different from what the poet describes when he sings:

> Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
> The Christian's native air;
> His watchword at the gates of death;
> He enters heaven by prayer.

It is well worthy of remark that from the first, Christianity has always been known in Madagascar as "the praying" religion (*ny fìvavàhana*), and it is understood that it depends greatly on constant, earnest, believing prayer. The Christians are known as "the praying ones"; and just as it was said of the Apostle Paul, when he became a servant of Christ, "Behold, he prayeth," so in Madagascar it is said of such and such an one, of Rakòto, or Ravèlo, or Rabàry, or of Rafàra, or Ravaò, or Rakètaka,[1] "He [or she] has become one of the praying ones"—"*mpivàvaka ìzy.*"

During those times of persecution, already referred to more than once in these pages, there were periods when it almost ceased as regards active opposition; and then again there were years when it blazed out afresh with fury and struck terror into the hearts of all. At one of those times of special violence the whole Capital was a scene of confusion and rushing to and fro, as the soldiers searched house after house to apprehend the praying people. In one of these native houses there was gathered together a little company of Christian women. There they sat in terror, afraid to read God's Word, afraid to pray, trembling lest the persecutors should break in upon them and take them away to prison and chains, and perhaps to a cruel death.

After they had remained together thus for some time, one of the native preachers came in, a man of remarkable faith and courage. He immediately inquired the reason of their fears and their apprehensions. On being told, he said, " But have you not read together any of the promises of God ? " " No," they said ; " we have been too greatly terrified by the shouts and cries outside in the streets." " But have you not prayed together and sought for strength ? " he asked ; and again the women answered that they had been too much afraid even to kneel down and pray. " Ah," he said, " that will never do. Come, let us read together the 46th Psalm." So he read the gracious words : " God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble ; therefore will we not fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the depths of the sea," etc. And then he knelt down and prayed with such fervour and such confidence in God's protecting care, and His willingness and power to deliver, that all their terror passed away ; they were able implicitly to confide in their Father's love ; and for long after that day, whenever these good women were tempted to fear and to distrust, the remembrance of that Psalm and of that prayer was enough to dispel all their doubts, and to give them confidence that God would never forsake them.

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[1] These are common names of Malagasy men and women.

Another instance may be given, showing the power of prayer in Madagascar even upon those who were not Christians.

During that same persecution just mentioned there was a good man named Ramànantsòa, who, for long after the country was reopened to the Gospel, was senior pastor of one of the Memorial Churches. He was one of those who were sought for to be killed in those troubled times. He told us how, when persecution was about to break out again, the Christians in the Capital were warned by some friends in high position that on the morrow they would be denounced by public proclamation in the market-places. So they fled away by night to save their lives, and he among them. For a long time he was in hiding, but at last his heart grew faint and weary within him, for he could not bear any longer this absence from his home and his wife and children.

So at length he resolved to run all risks and go back again; and casting himself on God's guardian care, he journeyed homewards, travelling mostly after nightfall. Coming near the Capital one evening, he thought he might venture in, for it was dark, and his face was partly covered with his *làmba.* So he entered the city and went along one of those steep, rocky paths which were almost the only ones up the city hill and led up to his house. He thought that no one had recognized him as he climbed up the rough paths, but in this, as we shall see, he was mistaken. That night, after he had come into his house, and after the first joyful greetings were over, he gathered wife and children together around him, as his custom was, and called in the servants, as well as two or three neighbours—people close at hand whom he knew to be Christians, disciples in secret, that they might read and pray together. They did not dare to sing much in those days, for fear some passer-by should overhear and go and inform against them.

Well, he was seated there that night in the midst of the little company of trembling worshippers, his Bible on his knee, and he was reading to them one of those grand old Psalms which have been the help and comfort of God's afflicted people in many lands and in all ages. As he sat and read to them out of the Psalm, suddenly the door opened, and two soldiers stepped in, sent to apprehend him then and there. But he, brave Christian man that he was, only sat still and quietly went on with his reading; and the soldiers stood there just inside the door; they did not speak, but stood and looked at him, as if to make sure that this was the very man they had been sent to seize. And they listened, but no one marked how long; but they stood and looked and silently listened to the Word of God and to the prayer addressed to God.

Then, at last, as if some invisible hand had been laid upon them, they softly went back and stepped outside, closed the door, and went their way into the darkness. Was there not some power, not of earth, that held them back that night? Was there not some voice that spake to them and said: "Touch not mine anointed, and do my servants no harm"? "For the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them."

It is said about the heroic first martyr for Christ in Madagascar, the gentle Rasalàma, that before she was about to be speared she requested of the executioners to be allowed a few minutes to pray. This was granted, and as she was still in prayer, her spirit passed away to the Saviour Whom she loved.

And this belief in prayer as power with God is still a characteristic of Malagasy Christians. Among the seven or eight evangelists in my own district, the youngest was one who had come from our Sunday School, had been one of my students at the College, and for whom I felt a warm affection. At the meetings of these evangelists at our house, after asking them to tell us of any incident of interest in their work during the previous six months, this young man, Razàkandìsa, who retained to the last a boyish freshness, almost always had something to tell us. On one occasion he related how a man of their village, who had been concerned in the heathen rebellion, had returned home and was ashamed and half-frightened to be seen, and so did not come to church. Razàka called to see him and urged him to serve God, but what he said had little effect. Then he betook himself to prayer for him, and prayed very earnestly that he might be led to repent. But for some time there seemed to be no answer to his petitions. Then, said he, " I prayed hard and prayed again and again that God would touch his heart " ; and on the following Sunday, lo and behold ! there was the repentant rebel just inside the door, and listening to the service and the preaching. After some time he asked for admission to the Church, and eventually became a consistent Christian. So Razàka was confirmed in his belief that " praying breath was not spent in vain."

A few years ago the congregation in one of Bétsiléo mission districts were much troubled and hindered in all their Christian service by a native diviner, who had great influence over the people all around, and was feared for his supposed supernatural power to do them evil. The church members at length went to visit him and remonstrate with him, and urged him to cease his evil practices and believe the Gospel. But all they said was of no effect, and he scorned their words and their reasonings. Then they said, "The only thing we can do now is to pray for him, and to unite in earnest petitions that God would touch his heart and change his life." Accordingly, a number of them met together one evening in the little chapel, and continued almost all through the night in importunate, believing prayer that the things they could not do, God would accomplish for them. And their faith was not in vain; God honoured their trust in Him; the diviner became a changed man; he threw away the things by which he had bewitched the people, and was baptized, and asked that his name be changed to Paul, in token of his altered life. And so the church in that village were confirmed in their belief that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Another instance may be given. Not many months ago, in a village remote from the Capital, the evangelist stationed there had a child dangerously ill with double pneumonia. The native doctor, a man trained in France, did all that he could in the way of treatment and medicine, but it seemed of no effect, and the child appeared to be dying. A French doctor, who happened to be passing through the village just then, was asked to come and see the little patient; but he confirmed the Malagasy doctor's opinion, and said that nothing more could be done, that the child was in a state of collapse, and that he could only live an hour or two longer. On hearing this, the father and mother said: "Well, if you two gentlemen can do nothing more, we must apply to another doctor," and they went away to a neighbouring house and spent nearly an hour in earnest, agonizing prayer that God would save the life of their child. On their way back home they were met by one of their friends to tell them that during their absence a remarkable change had occurred in the child's condition, that he had recovered consciousness, had asked for food, and seemed wonderfully better. They soon found that this was indeed the case. Both doctors said they could not understand it, but that undoubtedly an extraordinary improvement had come over their patient. And this continued, and the child regained perfect health and strength. The French doctor was curious to know *who* that other doctor was to whom they applied, and they answered, "Doctor Jesus!" Was it not because that simple-minded Malagasy Christian couple had read our Lord's gracious promise: "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for you"? They believed that promise; they took Christ at His word; and may we not say that He honoured that faith by giving them their child back again as "life from the dead"?

It should be remembered that besides that quarter-century of persecution under the heathen Queen Rànavàlona we have had two other persecutions in Madagascar since her days, viz. that carried on by the heathen rebels against French authority and Christianity, and also that caused by the Jesuits against Protestantism. In both of these the fidelity of the Christian Malagasy was again put to the test, and again it came out victorious in the conflict. In the heathen rebellion one of my evangelists and his wife were captured and detained in one of the rebel camps for nearly a year. Again and again they were threatened with death unless they joined in heathen ceremonies, and they fully expected to be killed, but they stood firm, although they suffered much in consequence and were frequently half-starved; but eventually the camp was attacked by the French forces and they were able to escape.

Other Christian natives, however, were killed. One of these was a poor leper, who was in charge of some of the property of the Leper Asylum. The rebels seized him and threatened him with death unless he joined them and gave up Christianity. But he steadfastly refused, although cruelly beaten and tortured. At length, finding that he would not abandon his faith, they killed him and then burned the poor wounded and maimed body, and so added another to "the noble army of [Malagasy] martyrs."

In the unrest which followed the French conquest for some time, and when General Gallieni was away in the north of the island, putting down the rebellion against foreign authority, the Jesuit missionaries of the central provinces thought that they had now a fine opportunity of crushing Protestantism. So they went about in the country districts telling the ignorant people that as Roman Catholicism was the French religion, all Malagasy who wished to be considered loyal subjects of France must be Roman Catholics, because Protestantism was the English religion. Not only so, but in many places they accused the pastor and the leading Christians of the village churches, who remained firm in their faith, of being enemies and disloyal, and led the French officers in charge of that district to shoot them; and thus many of the best people were killed.

Besides this, they seized about a hundred of our Protestant churches. The Roman Catholic bishop went himself to some of them and told the congregation that he must have the place to celebrate Mass, and ordered all who would not join his Church to leave the building. At one time there was hardly one of the 280 L.M.S. churches in the Bétsiléo province whose pastor or leading people were not either in prison or banished, through the accusations of the Roman Catholic priests and the compliance of the French Governor of the province. It is not to be wondered at that numbers of half-instructed Malagasy were terrorized into joining the Roman Catholic Mission congregations, although a large proportion of them afterwards returned to Protestantism when "the tyranny was overpast." The coming of a number of French Protestant missionaries soon gave the people assurance that the priests had deceived them, and that Protestantism was *not* confined to English people. And the Malagasy had an object lesson, a convincing proof that Roman Catholicism was essentially a persecuting system, and ready to use any deception, or trickery, or cruelty to promote its own ends. In justice to General Gallieni it must be stated that as soon as he was made clearly aware of the facts, he obliged the Jesuits to restore the greater part of the hundred Protestant churches they had stolen, leaving only about half a dozen in their hands. And the persecutions of 1896–1898, equally with that of 1835–1861, showed that the martyr spirit had not died out in Madagascar, but that many native Christians were still prepared to give up their lives rather than give up their faith.

The Great War in France and Belgium, while revealing some of the very worst aspects of human nature, also developed, as we know, many of its nobler features, in self-sacrifice and devotion to duty. The Malagasy, as inhabitants of a French colony, took their part in the great conflict; and more than 40,000 of them were sent to the eastern and western fronts, as well as half as many more, who served as artificers to the troops. Of these native soldiers and workmen, half of their number belonged to Protestant churches and were brought up in the schools of the different missions. And it was most encouraging to us Madagascar missionaries to hear that the chaplains who visited them on the front, or in the camps, reported that their officers were unanimous in acknowledging the firmness of the moral character of the Malagasy Christians. One chaplain wrote: "Their major was praising them yesterday very highly, as well for their gallant conduct in the lines, as for their good behaviour in the quarters and their quiet nature. Several of them, especially the Protestants, who are the best educated, have got positions of trust, and their chiefs are amazed at the most delicate conscience by which they perform their duties." The General, speaking of the Malagasy tirailleurs, in his order to his division, said: "The battalion has not ceased fighting from May 27th to June 4th, disputing the ground with an undaunted tenacity and without any care of its enormous losses, against an opponent most superior in number; it has largely contributed by its spirit of sacrifice and its brilliant military quality, to repair a difficult situation and reconstitute the front against which the efforts of the enemy were broken."

Another French chaplain wrote: "I am just now in daily contact with a group of Malagasy soldiers, of whom 150 to 160 are Protestants. Two of them are native evangelists who are valuable fellow-workers with me. They have a real, strong, and living piety. When I am away, they never neglect holding with their comrades the daily evening service and the Sunday service. The French officers and soldiers have been struck with the fact the Protestant Malagasy boys, wherever they are, faithfully perform their religious duties and provide for their own worship in a way that shows a religious education strongly rooted. 'Ah! they do credit to those who brought them up,' said a French officer to me. Is not this a deserved homage to our Protestant missions? The Malagasy boys distinguish themselves by their sobriety, their docility, their obedience and their gentleness. I never heard of any case of drunkenness, in spite of many temptations and the example, alas, of their white brothers ! "

In a paper written for the *Antanànarivo Annual* several years ago by my brother missionary, the Rev. J. Pearse, my friend pointed out some of the " fruits " of the profession of Christianity by many Malagasy whom he had known. Among these he cited the following : (1) Honest voluntary confession of sin, and willingness to make restitution for the past ; (2) sympathy with those who are in trial and sorrow ; (3) anxiety for the spiritual welfare of relatives and friends ; and (4) cheerful submission to the will of God. On each of these heads he gave a short narrative in illustration and proof of his statements. In closing his paper he made the following remarks, which I will venture to quote. He said : " In estimating the character of native Christians in Madagascar, we should bear in mind not only the comparative newness of Christianity as their religion, but should also remember that many of them are hindered in their religious life by the evil example and influence of some of the Europeans, who, for trading and other purposes (see Chapter XV, *post*) have taken up their residence in Madagascar. A short time ago one of the best native evangelists said to me : ' You missionaries are like those who carry soap and wash dirty clothes to make them clean, but they,' referring to some of the foreign residents in the place, ' are like others who bring soot and sprinkle it on the newly washed clothes ; so when can you expect the clothes to be clean ? ' "

Another point in connection with the Christian life of the Malagasy may be noticed here, and that is, the illustration it gives of early Church history.

In reading many passages in the New Testament, a thoughtful student must frequently be struck by the somewhat strange admonitions found in the apostolic Epistles and addressed to the churches of that early age ; precepts which refer, not to matters of faith and doctrine, but to what we are accustomed to think of as mere worldly morality. We find, for instance, the admonitions, " Let him that stole steal no more," " Lie not one to another," "Let no evil communication proceed out of your mouth," together with many others of similar import; and it strikes us as somewhat extraordinary that the apostles should think it necessary to address such commands to those whom, in the very same epistles, they call "sons of God," and "called to be saints." There appears at first sight to be a strange inconsistency in such different language being addressed to the same people.

But we in this Christian England, where the Gospel has been a power for many centuries, raising the tone of morals and purifying the whole social system, forget that what the world now claims as *its* morality—mere honesty and truthfulness and purity—is really the offspring of Christian teaching, and that these things were not recognized as duties by the mass of society in the old Pagan world.

Those, however, who labour in heathen countries, or amongst people only lately emerged from heathenism, see at once the need of such admonitions as were addressed by the apostles to the early churches. For we find strange inconsistencies and inequalities of character among our converts. And when we first engage in mission work we often feel shocked and pained to find what a low moral sense sometimes exists in our professedly Christian people. We are surprised to find men and women who are capable at times of rising to a sublime elevation of self-denial for Christ's sake, sometimes descending to very low and unworthy actions; we occasionally detect them in lying, cheating, and falling back into sins of impurity in a way that is intensely disappointing and perplexing to us. And therefore superficial observers, especially those who have little or no sympathy with any Christian work, are exceedingly quick to point out these inconsistencies, and from them to infer that the religion of such weak brethren is a piece of hypocrisy from beginning to end.

But such a conclusion is as untrue as it is unfair and short-sighted. Such severe critics judge these newly Christianized converts by a standard only rightly applicable to people who have been long under the purifying influence of the Gospel. They forget, and even we, their missionaries, are apt to forget, the heathen influences to which the Malagasy people have been exposed for long past ages, and which are still strong around them. In their heathen state there was no stigma attached to such sins as impurity, or deceit, or fraud ; these latter were indeed rather admired as proofs of superior cunning, as things to be imitated, so far at least as they would not bring the offender within the penalties of the native laws. We forget that time is required to form a purified public opinion, an enlightened " Christian conscience " in a people ; and while we strive, and not unsuccessfully, to raise the whole tone of feeling as regards morals, we can make allowances for those who occasionally sin flagrantly against our higher standard of right and wrong. And we come to perceive that although some of our people do at times fall into gross moral offences, they yet are not hypocrites and deceivers when they profess to love the Lord Jesus Christ ; they do really believe in and serve Him, although not as yet fully " purged from their old sins." In this, as in numerous other instances, light is thrown upon the apostolic and early Church history by missionary experience in modern days.

Another testimony from one of my brother missionaries as to the reality of the Christianity of some of his people may be quoted here. He wrote :

" We have lost two very old men during the year, whom we could ill spare. They were both miserably rheumatic and extremely ugly—yes, ' ugly ' is the only word that will describe their knobby misshapen features, rendered still more marked in the case of one from deep pock-marks and the loss of an eye. And yet we could better have spared far younger and more comely men, for these were living epistles—epistles in most dilapidated bindings, but so clearly legible that they were known and read of all men. Visiting one of these just before his death, he told me that he was going a little ahead, but that he should be waiting and watching for us who were coming after. The other, on bidding me farewell, must needs take my hand and kiss it with a reverence that plainly told me he was thinking of former days, and of all he owed to those who first brought to him the knowledge of salvation."

In my capacity for twenty-five years as Principal of the L.M.S. College at Antanànarìvo, it was a part of my duty to obtain from those who wished to enter the College as students answers to several questions, and among these was one as to how they became Christians. And as rather interesting light was cast by their replies as to the nature of the religious influences which acted on many of our best evangelists and pastors, I made one day an analysis of these replies, grouping them under some ten different headings.

The number of papers examined was fifty, and nearly half of these students ascribe their conversion to (1) *Sermons* they had heard; in a few instances the preacher's name was given, and these included English missionaries and native pastors; and in some cases the text which had impressed them was given.

But in almost as many instances their change of heart and life was attributed to (2) *Study of the Scriptures*, generally together with the preaching of the Gospel. In some cases, preaching had led them to careful study of the Bible and had thus brought them to repentance and faith in Christ.

In two or three cases, (3) *the Reading of Religious Books* was the means of conversion, *Pilgrim's Progress* being especially mentioned. This book, translated (the first part of it) by Mr. Johns, of the first mission, was a favourite one with the earliest Malagasy Christians, and prized as next in value to the Scriptures themselves; in fact, I believe some of them even thought it inspired, and bound it up with their Testaments, much in the same way as the *Shepherd of Hermas*, the *Epistle of Barnabas* and other early Christian books were often bound up with the Gospels and were considered as parts of the Canon of Scripture.

In the case of eight or nine students (4) *Conversation with Christian Friends* was the turning-point in their lives, combined with the sermons they had heard, or the study of the Word. With some four men, (5) *the Teaching and Influence of their Parents* was the beginning of their seeking after Christ. One said that he could not point out any special time of turning to God, for, from a child, he had always been drawn to love Him and seek His favour; doubtless this also was the result of parental influence, or that of some near Christian relatives.

21. mai 1912.
ANDRO NIVOAHAN?
I J. RAZAFINTSEHENO
HO EVANJELISTA.

MALAGASY EVANGELIST, WITH MOTHER, WIFE AND CHILDREN

Some ascribed conversion primarily to the (6) *Direct Influence of the Holy Spirit,* as well as to the reading of Scripture, or the hearing of sermons. One student remarked : " I know and firmly believe that, before I was born, I was chosen of God ; it was not preaching, or the reading of the Bible that first made me a Christian, although these things strengthened and confirmed me, but the leading of the Spirit alone. The love of God, even before I could understand it, was sweet and precious to me."

Four or five students specified as powerfully affecting them, (7) *Reflections on their State as Sinners* in the sight of a holy God, as well as the unsatisfying character of earthly things. One said : " I reflected deeply about them all and saw that there was always something wanting ; and so I was led to seek union with Christ, and then I obtained satisfaction and peace."

Some ascribed their first desires after Christ to (8) *Affliction.* One man, who came from the Bétsiléo province, had been attacked in a heathen raid on this village, his house burned, so that one of his feet had been badly injured, and while he was yet suffering from the effects he was led to seek after God.

One student attributed his repentance to (9) *Revival Services* held in the Capital a few years previously, especially at the last meeting, when many spoke of their change of heart, which he felt he had not experienced ; so the need of salvation came powerfully upon him, leading him to seek for pardon and peace.

In one instance, (10) *Reflection on the Glory and Beauty of Nature* was given as the chief influence in leading a student to seek for reconciliation with God. And in more than one case, (11) *A Dream* led to serious reflection and desire for forgiveness. The Malagasy attach a good deal of importance to dreams, and think they often receive guidance from them. I have heard from other people of the religious influence of dreams, and of conversion being ascribed to them. Here and now, as in the days of Job, it seems that sometimes " God speaketh once, yea twice, in a dream, in slumberings upon the bed ; then He openeth the ears of man, to bring his soul from the pit, that he may be enlightened with the light of the living."

Missionaries have often thought and spoke of the Malagasy as not very impressionable with regard to religious matters, and in ordinary circumstances this is doubtless the case. But the religious awakenings in the Bétsiléo province, and also in Imèrina, have proved that under this somewhat stolid exterior there are depths of feeling which can be stirred, and powerfully moved by the Spirit of God. We have seen quite enough to convince us that "power from on high" has come to numbers of our Malagasy people.

In the preceding pages enough has probably been said to show that Christian teaching has, ever since its first introduction into Madagascar and up to the present time, powerfully influenced the life and conduct of large numbers of the Malagasy people. This chapter therefore may be appropriately concluded by showing what Christianity has done for the nation at large, wherever it has exerted its influence upon the inhabitants of the island, chiefly, however, but not exclusively, on the central and southern regions of Madagascar.

It is not, of course, claimed that all the people of the parts just mentioned are even nominally Christians, or that the majority of them are adherents of the churches by regular attendance on Divine worship; yet every one is more or less affected by what has been preached and taught in their midst for two or three generations past. Society generally has been enlightened and purified and humanized by the proclamation of the gospel; many have not yet eaten of the *fruit* of the tree of life which has been planted among them, yet the *leaves* of that tree have brought bodily healing to tens of thousands, and have dispelled the darkness of idolatry and superstition from the minds of hundreds of thousands of the Malagasy people.

The effects of missionary work and teaching in Madagascar may be considered under two heads, first, in the *Evil Things* it has put down and destroyed; and secondly, in the *Positive Benefits* it has conferred upon the people and upon society generally. And it will be seen that here we hardly speak of the spiritual benefits which the Gospel has brought (they are sufficiently dealt with in preceding pages), but of those things which chiefly refer to the present life. We cannot be accused in Madagascar of "other-world-ism" and of forgetting "the life that now is," although our highest aim is to fit men for "the life that is to come."

What, then, has the gospel done for Madagascar? Here are some of the evil things and customs which have been entirely or largely destroyed by the teaching of its truths:

1. *Idolatry.*—Formerly throughout Imèrina and Bétsiléo small pieces of wood or bamboo, fastened with silver chains, anointed with castor-oil, and covered with blue cloth or scarlet silk, were considered as gods, were invoked and prayed to and feared. These things, with all the foolish and impure ceremonies and customs connected with them, have passed away through the influence of gospel teaching on the mind of the first Christian queen, and of an enlightened minority of her people.

2. Formerly, both *Polygamy and Divorce* were not considered as in any way disgraceful, and the purity of women was a thing unknown and not looked for. It must be acknowledged that there is still great room for improvement in these respects; but no one who remembers what native society was fifty or even forty years ago and contrasts it with the present, will deny that great advances have been made in family life and in individual purity. Our churches are recognizing more and more the laws of the New Testament on all these points, and are endeavouring to conform to its teachings.

3. Formerly, whenever there was a birth in the royal family, native custom allowed unlimited and open, shameless licentiousness to be practised even in the public streets. These times were called *Andro tsy màty,* i.e. "days not causing death," to any offender. But it need hardly be said that these evil things have long ago been shamed out of existence by the influence of Christian teaching.

4. Again, from ancient times, the belief in *Lucky and Unlucky Days and Times* has been a marked feature of Malagasy superstition, as described more fully in Chapter III, together with the cruelty, and loss of infant life especially, which resulted from these beliefs. And although these superstitions have still a strong hold on the peoples of the heathen and the partially enlightened districts, yet in

Imèrina and Bétsiléo it may be said that the cruelties connected with them have become almost entirely a thing of the past.

5. So also with the belief in the *Tangèna Poison Ordeal*, which was formerly very firmly rooted in the native mind, and caused the death of many thousands every year, as also shown in Chapter III. But happily, for many years past, the enlightenment brought by Christianity has put an end to this cruel superstitition, and it has passed away, never to return.

6. Other superstitious practices might be noted here as having practically come to an end through the influence of Christian missionaries, such as the *Sikìdy* or divination; the use of the *Fàditra* or offering made to avert evil, as well as the numerous *fàdy* or tabooed things and actions, etc.; but the foregoing instances are sufficient to show how many evil things have been already put down in Madagascar through the influence of the gospel on the minds and habits of the Malagasy.[1]

But besides all this, much *Positive Good* has also been accomplished in Madagascar through missionary agency, as will be seen by the following facts:

1. The missionaries of the London Missionary Society were the first to form *Schools* in Imèrina, and between the years 1820–1835 from 11,000 to 12,000 children were instructed in those schools, and so a foundation was laid for an enlightened and intelligent community. And from the re-opening of the country to Christian influence in 1862 until the present time the L.M.S., together with the agents of other societies, has spent thousands of pounds annually to further primary and higher education, so that between two and three hundred thousand children were, up to the close of 1906, being taught in these mission schools. The old native Government spent very little money to promote education; and the French Government does not, after closing a large proportion of mission schools, provide for half of those who ought to be learning.

2. To missionaries of the L.M.S. was owing *the Reduction*

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[1] See also what is said in Chapter IV about mob-law and the stoning to death for petty thefts, and the burning alive of soldiers for military offences, both cruelties long ago forbidden.

of the Malagasy Language to a Written Form, and the settling of its orthography, which, with some slight changes, has been in use for nearly a hundred years up to now. Writing, reading, arithmetic, grammar, geography, and needlework of all kinds have been regularly taught for more than half a century, and, of course, religious knowledge, and also, especially since 1895, the French language. So that a large number of young men, comprising the most intelligent portion of the community, have thus been prepared to act as government officials—clerks, interpreters, governors, doctors, teachers, assistants in stores and warehouses and in other employments. Practically, the government of the colony could not have been carried on after the French conquest but for the educational work previously accomplished by missionary societies.

3. To missionaries of the L.M.S. again was owing the *Introduction of Printing* into Madagascar, and the instruction of Malagasy youths in the arts of composing type and of binding books. The foundations of a native literature have thus been laid, and a large number of school books of all grades, science handbooks, medical and surgical works, histories, dictionaries, periodicals, hymnals, Scripture commentaries, devotional, Biblical and theological books, have been issued from the mission presses. The most important of these have been a *Bible Dictionary* and a *Concordance.* The mention of this last-named work leads me to say that it involved an immense amount of labour for thirteen years, and was carried through and completed in 1916 by my friends, the Rev. F. W. Dennis and Mrs. Dennis, assisted by many Malagasy lads. This *Concordance to the Malagasy Bible* is a quarto book of 713 pages, in three columns and very small type, and is quite as full as Cruden's well-known work. It has severely taxed the eyesight of its compilers, but will be of great value to all Malagasy preachers and students of the Scriptures. Lithography has also been introduced by the Friends' Mission, and many native youths can produce excellent drawings, maps and diagrams for the illustration of scientific and other books.

4. But missionary enterprise has also done very much for the *Industrial and Social Advancement* of the Malagasy, since to artisan missionaries of the L.M.S. (1826–1835) was

due the teaching of European methods of carpentry, and construction in stone-work, the manufacture of many useful things, as will be shown more fully in Chapter XVII. The erection of the four Martyr Memorial Churches again (1864–1874) gave a great impetus to the arts of construction, for each became a school of native workmen, in which masons, carpenters, tilers and glaziers became proficient in these handicrafts. For many years the L.M.S. had two skilled builders and architects in their employ; and one of them constructed a canal and reservoir with water-wheels and other works for the native Government.

5. *Industrial Schools* have been carried on for many years by the L.M.S. and other societies in Madagascar. At Isoàvina numbers of native lads have been instructed in carpentry and working in metal. And in the high schools of the various missions, the senior classes have also been carefully taught in the same arts, in conformity with the programme laid down by the French educational department, while many others have received a business training. And the women and girls have not been forgotten in the promotion of industrial work. To two lady missionaries was due the teaching of lace-making in the Imèrina and Bétsiléo provinces respectively, as will be noticed more fully in a succeeding chapter.

6. In Madagascar, as in almost all other countries where missionary societies are labouring, *Medical Work* has not been neglected, and the healing of the sick has accompanied the preaching of the gospel. A Hospital was opened in 1865, where hundreds of patients were treated and nursed and thousands more received medicine and advice. A much larger and more perfectly equipped hospital of the united L.M.S. and Friends' societies was opened in 1891, and did more extended work, until it was requisitioned by the French authorities in 1896, since which time medical missionary operations have been much more restricted. For several years also a Hospital and Dispensary were carried on in the Antsihànaka province; and the same work was continued for long until recently in the Bétsiléo province, in both cases by L.M.S. doctors. A Medical Mission Academy was founded, where a considerable number of native doctors were trained, receiving a diploma

after passing very strict examinations. For many years the Malagasy depended upon these, in addition to the few Europeans, for all medical and surgical aid. A number of young women were also thoroughly instructed in midwifery and sick nursing, thus helping to save very many lives and to alleviate much suffering. Most of this work has now been taken over by the Government Medical Bureau. The Norwegian Lutheran Mission has also a well-appointed Hospital and trained physician and nurses, in the Vàkinankàratra district; and an American Lutheran Mission does similar work in the province of Tulléar, in the south-west of Madagascar.

7. Like so many other peoples, the Malagasy are subject to the terrible disease of leprosy; and here again the merciful spirit of the gospel has been shown in the erection of several *Leper Asylums* for alleviating the sufferings of those attacked. The L.M.S., the Norwegian, the Roman Catholic, and latterly also the Paris missions, have all engaged in this benevolent work. That of the first mentioned was carried on for many years at Isoàvina by the Rev. P. G. Peake, from funds given by friends in England; but it has been taken over by the Government, with a French Protestant deaconess as its superintendent. The Roman Catholic Leproserie is also now in the hands of the Government, but a small L.M.S. asylum near Fianàrantsòa, and a very large one, with 900 patients, near Antsìrabé, supported by the Norwegian Lutherans, are still carried on by members of those missions, who tend the poor afflicted people with great devotion and Christlike sympathy and self-denial.

8. The orphans have not been forgotten in Madagascar, amidst the claims of other unfortunate people, and *an Orphanage* was for many years at work in Antanànarìvo. But since this was largely managed by the Malagasy themselves, M. Augagneur summarily suppressed it, in his antipathy to all native associations, although the institution was also carried on with the help and advice of the missionaries living among the people. However, for a long time many children were rescued from poverty, taught useful trades and employments and set in the way of obtaining a respectable livelihood.

In the various directions, therefore, just described in some detail, I think it may be justly claimed that in destroying evil and in promoting good, the gospel of Christ has shown its power over the national life of Madagascar, as well as in the individual lives of unnumbered Malagasy people.

CHAPTER XI

THE BIBLE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CHRISTIANITY IN MADAGASCAR

From the introduction of Protestant Christianity into Madagascar and up to the present day, the progress of the gospel has been inseparably connected with the translation and study and reception of the Word of God. The words in the Acts of the Apostles, describing the influence of apostolic preaching in Ephesus, might fitly be taken as a description of the four chief periods in the history of mission work in the island: "So mightily grew the Word of the Lord and prevailed." This was true of the first period in its history—that of the sixteen years' *planting* of the gospel in Madagascar, from 1820 to 1836. And then it was eminently true of the second period—that of the *persecution* of the gospel for twenty-five years, from 1836 to 1861; for during that long quarter-century the people had no living voice of missionary or foreign teacher to help them; they had to rely exclusively upon the written or printed Word, interpreted to their hearts by the Holy Spirit. And then again, during the third period in the history of mission work there—that of the gospel's *progress* during thirty-four years (1861–1895), it was no less true that "the Word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed." And once more, during a quarter-century of *toleration* only, God's Word has enabled the native Church to hold its ground and to extend its influence, notwithstanding heathen rebellion and persecution, and Jesuit craft and plotting, and Government suspicion and dislike.

In Madagascar, as in every other country where Protestant missions are established, one of the earliest matters to which time and thought and labour are devoted, after a fair knowledge of the language had been acquired, was that of giving to the people the Holy Scriptures in their own language. The first missionary to reach Antanànarìvo was a Welshman, David Jones, who arrived in the Capital in October 1820. Early in the following year he welcomed as his first colleague his fellow-countryman, the Rev. David Griffiths, and to these two men is to be chiefly attributed the honour of giving to the Malagasy people the first translation of the complete Bible. It should be remembered that when they came to Madagascar they found no written language, no literature, no learned class. They had to learn first to understand the people's language, to collect its vocabulary, to find out its grammar and construction and idioms, to settle its orthography and much besides. They had to work under immense disadvantages, but they grappled with their task, and in about three years after the arrival of the first of the two in the Capital they were preaching in the native language, and had even commenced the great work of Bible translation, so that by the end of 1828 the whole Bible was completed in manuscript.

In an old report of 1827 sent to the Directors of the L.M.S., the missionaries said: "Wishing to hallow this new year of our missionary service by opening the fountain of living waters in the midst of this parched ground, we put to press to-day the first sheets of the Gospel of Luke. May the healing streams ere long flow in a thousand channels and transform it into the garden of the Lord." It was a beautiful New Year's wish for the great work they then commenced; and their hope and prayer for its success was fulfilled, although they could not, of course, foresee the difficulties which would oppose the diffusion of the Sacred Word within a very few years. However, they went on steadily with their work, so that the printing of the complete New Testament was finished in 1830, greatly to the joy of the native Christians. Meanwhile, the Old Testament was also proceeded with, until at length, in 1835, the whole Bible in the Malagasy tongue was issued. And it was surely providentially ordered that the great task was completed just at that time, for it was on March 1st of that very year, 1835, that, at a great national assembly, the Queen's proclamation was made, forbidding under severe penalties the holding of any Christian worship, or the reading of any Christian books. The missionaries had to leave the island, but they left with their people the complete Word of God to be their comfort and support during the long period of persecution and repression. It was, without doubt, largely owing to that fact that the little company of native Christians held fast to their faith and spread it around them during those twenty-five years.

Now it is instructive to remember that some three hundred years ago a determined effort was made by the Romish Church to convert the Malagasy to the Roman Catholic faith. A number of priests and monks from Goa in southern India settled on the south-eastern coast of Madagascar in 1600, and remained there for nineteen years. They were, no doubt, earnest and zealous according to their light; and there still remain some small books which they prepared in the dialect of the coast tribes, in which they gave the natives catechisms, prayers and forms of devotion, among which there are certain small portions of Scripture, such as the Lord's Prayer, the "Hail, Mary," the Creed and the Ten Commandments, of course leaving out the second one, and cutting the tenth into two to make the number complete. But they never made any attempt to give to their people a single book, either of the Old or the New Testament, no history or prophecy, no Gospel or Epistle. And what was the result of their nineteen years' residence among the south-eastern Malagasy? When they at length gave up the work and left the island, it left no trace at all, either in congregations or converts; it absolutely passed away. Those little books of devotion are the only result of the labour of many men for many years. And the reason of this failure was doubtless because they largely taught for doctrine the commandments of men, and deliberately withheld from their people the Scriptures, which would have made them wise unto salvation.

But what a striking contrast to that utter failure is the history of Protestant missions in Madagascar. Here was a band of only four or five men, who did the main work,[1] none of them remaining there more than about ten years, and yet in that comparatively short time they reduced the language to a written form, translated the whole Bible, founded a large number of schools, and gathered congregations and churches together. And because they had based all their teaching on the living Word of God, and were able to leave it complete with their people, that little band of about two hundred professed Christians were not crushed out by persecution, but steadily increased in number during those twenty-five years; so that when the mission was resumed in 1862 the two hundred had increased to upwards of two thousand! "The little one had become a thousand; the small one a strong nation." Was it not because the first missionaries honoured God's Word? And is not the contrast very striking, very instructive, and very encouraging to us who love and honour the Bible?

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[1] Other missionaries who went to Madagascar were only allowed to remain a short time, for the Queen at length made a law forbidding any foreigner to stay in the country more than one year.

The power of the Bible has been seen in individual Christian lives ever since its first proclamation in Madagascar, and an incident among its earliest adherents may be given here. The name of a Malagasy woman named Rafàravàvy was well known in England seventy or more years ago, for she was one of a few native Christians who were helped to escape from the island by Mr. and Mrs. Johns, and were brought by them to England in 1839. While still a heathen, and but recently married, she and her husband were desirous of getting a *sàmpy* or household god to consecrate, so to speak, their new home. For this purpose they went one day a walk of over twenty miles to the idol-maker, who lived for the convenience of his business at the edge of the great forest which extends for many hundred miles on the eastern side of Madagascar. Arriving there towards evening, the idol-maker went out into the woods to find a suitable tree, for only certain kinds of wood were used for the purpose; but with the usual hospitality of the Malagasy, he invited his visitors to eat rice and stay for the night in his house. He returned after some little time, bringing a small tree; and lopping off the branches and the superfluous wood, the fire on the hearth was replenished, the rice and other food was cooked, and as the chilly night drew on they were glad to warm themselves sitting round the hearth. During the late evening the idol-maker worked away at the *sàmpy*, fashioning it into a rude resemblance of a human figure.

On the following day they took the idol home with them, feeling much satisfaction at having, as they believed, a sacred thing in the house. But it happened that a few days afterwards, one of their friends, who was a Christian man, called to see them, not knowing where they had lately been, and sat down to read to them from a book hidden under the folds of his *làmba.* And remarkable to say, he read that striking passage in the forty-fourth chapter of Isaiah, describing the folly of idolatry, how with one part of a piece of wood men cook their food and warm themselves, and with another part they make a graven image, and bow down to it and say, "Deliver me, for thou art my god!" Rafàravàvy and her husband listened with astonishment to these words. "Why," they exclaimed, "this book of yours describes exactly what we were doing a few days ago. We did just as your book says. It seems to know all about us. Where did it come from? and who wrote it?" And so it led them to inquire into the religion taught by that book, and before long caused Rafàravàvy to believe in Christ and to become one of the most heroic and faithful of that band of native Christians.

At the opening services of one of the four Memorial Churches, the one built near the edge of that steep cliff down which many Christian people were hurled in 1849, one of the oldest native pastors came into the vestry to express to us his joy at having lived to see that day; and he contrasted the circumstances of himself and his fellow-Christians with what they felt forty years before, as they saw their teachers obliged, one after another, to leave them. He said: "I remember well Mr. Griffiths leaving us—that was a sad day! With a number of others, I accompanied him down the steep rough path going out of Antanànarìvo to the east; and there, a little way on the road, we stayed for a few words of farewell. And as he sat in his open palanquin he held up in his hand a copy of the New Testament, and said: 'You know, my friends, I have taught you that this is the Word of God; but your Queen says it is only the word of man, and she will destroy it; and if it is really as she says, no doubt she will be able to put it down. But if, as you and I believe, this is really the Book of Him Who said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word shall not pass away," then all that Rànavàlona can do will not destroy it, and it will live and grow.' " That was a true prophecy, and it was verified not only by the entire history of the twenty-five years' persecution, but by the progress of the gospel in Madagascar down to the present day.

Among my native friends in Madagascar was one whom I held in great esteem, the pastor of one of the churches in my Ambòhimànga district, a good man named Rainivèlo. He was my helper in my work as one of the revisers of the Malagasy Scriptures. Talking to him one day after we had carefully gone through the proof-sheet, I happened to ask, " Rainivèlo, how did you become a Christian ? Was it in the time of the first missionaries ? " He replied that it was some time after they had left the island, and that the circumstances were these : One day he happened to be walking through the Capital and noticed a small piece of printed paper lying by the roadside. Printed paper was a rare thing in those days, so he took it up and began to read it as he walked along, and soon became deeply interested in its contents. It was half a leaf torn from the Book of Psalms, probably from one of those Bibles destroyed by the Queen's orders. He could not remember the exact passage, but it was one of those numerous ones speaking of the majesty and goodness and mercy of Jehovah. The words powerfully impressed his mind, and he felt convinced that the Jehovah spoken of there was the true God. He resolved to find out something more about the religion which he knew was connected with the book, and with some difficulty got one of his Christian acquaintances to lend him a New Testament. This he diligently read, and soon, in a very gradual way, the light began to break in upon his soul. He just felt thus : This Jesus Christ here spoken of is the Saviour, and He can save *me* ; He is the Lord and Master, and I ought to serve *Him*. And so he began to serve the Lord Christ from that day, and he served Him until the end. And it should be remembered that it was no easy matter to serve Christ *then*. It involved danger, loss, suffering and perhaps death. He escaped this last result, but he suffered much for Christ's sake during those weary years. And so we see that God sometimes honours even a fragment of His own Word.

In the course of a large and enthusiastic meeting held at Antanànarìvo in May 1887, to celebrate the completion of the revision of the Malagasy Bible, the Prime Minister attended the service and brought hearty congratulations from the Queen, Rànavàlona II, upon the accomplishment of many years' labour. And in the course of his address he told the assembly that during the time of the persecution he put a Testament in an apartment of the Palace, where he knew it would be seen by the Princess Ramòma, as she was then named. She did see it; she did read it; and there is no doubt that the truths it contained had a great influence on her heart, so that she even attended now and then the secret meetings of the native Christians. And therefore, in God's providence, she was led, very soon after her accession to the throne, to avow herself a believer in Christ, to destroy the national idols, and thus to become the first Christian Queen of Madagascar.

In speaking of our Protestant Christians, the Jesuits sometimes say: "The religion of these people consists in nothing else but reading the Bible." One-sided as such a statement is, it contains such an element of truth that we have not much reason to complain of it. We can reply that the religion of our people is *founded on, is derived* from, "nothing else but reading the Bible." And it is just because it has such a Scriptural foundation that it has endured opposition and grown stronger year after year.

It is interesting to observe how the Romish priests can adopt the language of Protestants when it suits their purpose, and with what edifying earnestness they can use the very passages which we quote to induce the people to examine the Bible for themselves. They know, in fact, that their only hope of success lies in persuading the Malagasy that theirs is a more Scriptural system than ours. Quietly ignoring the anathemas of many of their Popes upon those who dare to exercise the right of private judgment, and search the Scriptures for themselves, they actually print upon the title-page of their monthly magazine the text, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." It is noteworthy to hear such enlightened and Protestant sentiments from such a quarter.

Some years ago, in our magazine called *Tèny Sòa,* several articles were inserted upon some points of the Romish controversy. This stirred up the priests to issue a periodical of their own, called *Rèsaka* (" Conversations "), that is, between a Catholic and a Protestant. It was cleverly done, but of course the latter gets much the worst of the argument, and in the end is triumphantly silenced by the Roman advocate, who quotes the Bible freely in support of his Church. And it is worthy of notice that the controversy became warmest on this point, whether the reading of the Scriptures had or had not been condemned by Romish ecclesiastical authority. They stoutly denied this for some time ; and when at last, on our side, overwhelming proof was given from decrees of Councils, bulls of Popes, and opinions of learned doctors, that the first of these statements was true, the Jesuits retreated in a cloud of personalities and violent abuse of our writers. It is, therefore, a significant fact that in a country where the Bible is extensively circulated and read, our opponents are obliged to adopt the very methods we employ, viz., to endeavour to support their claims by Scripture itself, and indeed to urge their people to do that which has been so strongly condemned by the highest authorities in their Church. They are driven to a thoroughly Pauline style of argument, and for the time to ignore the claim of authority, and to say in effect, " I speak as unto wise men ; judge ye what I say."

Our people have a very deep and sincere belief in the Bible as the unquestioned standard of faith and practice. They regard it as " the judge that ends the strife," as the final authority to which to appeal in all difficult and doubtful questions. " What saith the Scripture ? " is a constant sentiment in their minds in all church disputes. We had a striking illustration of this feeling of theirs in an incident which happened in the district of one of my brother missionaries. He had occasion to go out to one of his country churches to investigate a matter in which it appeared that the pastor and deacons had acted in a very improper manner. When he arrived at the village church the senior deacon rose and pointed to the open Bible, saying, " Dear sirs, there is the Word of God ; if we have been wrong, show us from that book wherein we have erred, and we are ready to confess and to forsake the evil. But until you show us the Scripture which condemns us, we are not willing to confess that we are in error or do as you desire." Such conduct shows that Malagasy Christians do not always take our word as necessarily right, but that they " search the Scriptures, whether these things are so." As one of my brethren remarked in his report: " Show the Malagasy chapter and verse asserting any truth you wish them to accept, and they are satisfied "; so they may truly be called " Bible Christians," and as shown in Chapter IX, a sect arose at one time and called themselves " Children of the Bible."

This reverence for the *letter* of Scripture has occasionally led some of the less enlightened and merely nominal Christians to try and defend evil practices by its supposed agreement with them. Thus, one man on being remonstrated with for taking a second wife, the first one being still living, replied, " Does not the Bible say, ' Two are better than one ' "? And another, reproved for intending to divorce his wife, said, " I read that ' Joseph intended to put away Mary privily,' and I am going to do it in a very quiet way."

This reverence for even the outward form of the Divine Word is curiously seen sometimes even among those who do not obey its teaching, and are still practically heathen. Not many years ago there was a considerable revival of heathen customs, partly owing to the open approval some French officials gave to the old superstitious practices, which they encouraged the people in doing instead of attending Christian worship. A rather celebrated native diviner obtained two Bibles and boiled them down; and the water thus obtained was sold as a very powerful and beneficial charm for all sorts of dreaded evils! And so these Holy Scriptures, in various ways, have a powerful influence in Madagascar. As noticed in the preceding chapter, an inquiry among a number of candidates for entrance into our Theological College as to what led them to become Christians, about half of them wrote that it was simply due to their reading the Bible.

Another instance of the love of the Malagasy for the Scriptures may be given by quoting from a letter addressed to me about two years ago by Ravèlojaona, a young pastor whom I have known from a very little boy. His father was for several years an evangelist in my district, and on my annual visits to his station to inspect the schools this lad and his brother were the brightest little fellows I have ever met, repeating passages from the Bible and hymns and the catechisms in a wonderfully correct way. But this young pastor was arrested on a false charge of disloyalty to the Government, and received a severe sentence, which was subsequently remitted when his innocence had been established. But for nearly five months he remained in prison, and in his letter he said :

" During three months I saw no one but the jailer, and occasionally my advocate ; and yet how great was my nearness to God. He indeed was my companion, Who never separated from me by day or by night. He talked with me continually ; He supported and comforted ; He enlightened, He strengthened. In the darkest nights (for I had no lamp, and oh, how long were the nights !) Jesus the Saviour was the Light itself, and I saw Him shining clearly. I shall never forget the sweetness to me of the Holy Scriptures. Although I had often read the Bible before then, how much more full of light and power did it become to me in many passages ! "

In another letter the writer describes how he had no book in prison except his Bible, and was allowed neither paper, pen, nor pencil. So he marked in his Bible, with a pin, the passages which had helped him most ; so the book became full of " pin-pricks " before his imprisonment was at an end.

Here is another illustration of the influence of the Bible upon a Malagasy woman of the Tsi-mi-hèty tribe.[1] She had been brought up in gross heathenism, following all the practices and customs of her tribe, and trusting implicitly in the diviner. But one day she had a vision, and in her dream saw a big black book suspended in the sky and certain letters, the meaning of which she could not tell, being unable to read. She was greatly troubled by her dream, and went off at once to the diviner for its interpretation, and was directed to make certain useless sacrifices to avert forth-coming evil. Then a strange thing happened: being a woman of some wealth, she had bought for seventy dollars a little slave girl, who had been brought up from the Bétsiléo province, far away to the south. One day, as the girl was cooking the midday meal, her mistress saw her take something secretly from inside her dress and pore over it. She asked the child what it was, and was told it was a book, the Bible. On examining the book the woman saw that it was like the thing she had seen in her dream, and on opening it saw letters, like those she had seen written in the sky. "Can you read this?" she asked. "Yes," was the reply, for she had been taught in the mission school far away in the south, where the book had been given her. It was then agreed that she should teach her mistress to read. The Bible became spelling and reading book, but something far, far more, for in it she read of God as Father, and of the coming of a Saviour. And then, little by little, the old heathen customs and beliefs and fears dropped away, and the light flooded her soul; and she sought for peace and found it.

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[1] A Malagasy tribe in northern central Madagascar. Their name means " the unshaven," because, while other Malagasy peoples were always obliged to shave their heads at the death of a chief, or the supreme sovereign, and to keep them shaven for a year, this tribe has always refused to do this.

But the sequel to this story must also be told. It was in 1895 that a French army landed on the north-west of Madagascar and marched to the Capital, which soon surrendered. There was a church at Màndritsàra, an important town of the Tsimihèty in those days; but in the year following the French invasion came the heathen rebellion, which swept away so many churches, and among them that at Màndritsàra. Practically all the Hova adherents fled for fear of their lives, but this woman stayed on; and when a French administrator was appointed to quell the rising and govern the province, this woman went boldly to him to beg permission to start the church again. Her friends tried to dissuade her, but God's call was too insistent. She got permission, and started services, and from that day onwards the church has gone steadily forward, so that now there is a vigorous congregation there, and three smaller daughter churches in the district, and applications have already been made for three more. The great sorrow of Ràmatòa's life is that so few of her tribe, the Tsimihèty, have as yet been won for Christ; the people are so firmly rooted in heathenism.

These are the people among whom three L.M.S. missionaries began work last year (1922); and there is therefore ground for hope that the darkness which yet so largely covers the province will be eventually dispersed, and that the true light will bring blessing and joy to those who have for so long sat in darkness and the shadow of death.

Something must be said in this chapter of the revision of the Malagasy Bible. All honour is due to Jones and Griffiths, who made the first translation; and considering all the disadvantages they had in having no native literature of any kind to consult, or any cultured or learned Malagasy to assist them in their work, the version they produced was wonderfully good and accurate and idiomatic. Any Malagasy who might read a copy of it to-day would have a perfectly clear rendering of the languages in which the Scriptures were first written. But it is a truism to say that first translations are always and necessarily imperfect, and as fuller and more accurate knowledge of a language is obtained, revision becomes necessary. So it is no disparagement to the great work begun by those two pioneers to say that it became evident, when new editions of the Malagasy Bible were needed, that it was desirable that the whole should be carefully revised.

This work was not commenced until the close of the year 1873, more than eleven years after the Madagascar mission of the L.M.S. was re-established in the island. The missionaries of that society, as well as those of others who had joined in evangelizing the people, had obtained a fairly accurate knowledge of the native language; a number of intelligent Malagasy were well able to give valuable assistance; a good deal of the "unwritten literature" of the people, in the shape of proverbs, legends, folk-lore and songs, etc., had been collected and was very helpful; and a committee, including missionaries of the London, the Norwegian, the Friends, and the Anglican societies was formed to carry on the revision of the Bible.

This committee consisted of eight members, and there were also always two or three Malagasy present to refer to on difficult points. The chief reviser and chairman of the committee was the Rev. W. E. Cousins, of the L.M.S., an accomplished scholar in Hebrew and Greek, who was released from all other work, except on Sundays, in order to prepare the preliminary proofs and carry everything through the press, as the work proceeded. Great pains and care were taken over the revision, which occupied ten years of steady labour, not including two years when the chief reviser was at home on furlough. A meeting was held every week for most of the time, there being in all 771 sittings, chiefly of three hours each, so that the work was not hurried, although a laborious one, and at times a heavy tax on our patience. Mr. Cousins said in an account of the revision: "I think every member of the committee would heartily confess our obligations to our native brethren. We have again and again found what numberless pitfalls lie in the path of one who is dealing with a language not his own. No amount of familiarity with it seems to give us quite the instinct and taste of a Malagasy; and we have been saved from many an ambiguity, and from not a few absurdities, by the keener perceptions of our native co-workers."

With regard to the general result of those years of labour and care and prayer, I think it may be said without hesitation that we have now in the beautiful Malagasy language a very clear and accurate and idiomatic version of God's Word. It is in the present every-day language of the people, not vulgarized, and not a book only for the learned. It is more intelligible to the ordinary Malagasy reader than our beloved Authorized English Version, with its seventeenth-century style, and many of its words obsolete, and others altered in meaning, is to an uncultured Englishman. It is a book in a language musical and melodious, delightful to listen to, to preach and teach in, and to speak. It has been most acceptable to the Malagasy, and like our Authorized Version in English, and Luther's translation in German, will certainly help to conserve a high standard of the native language for generations yet to come. And it is a very fortunate occurrence that this revised version was completed and in wide circulation in Madagascar some time before the French conquest, and the consequent introduction of many foreign words, which to some small extent, mix with the daily speech of the people. They have in their Bible their own language in its purity, little mingled with any foreign element.

In considering the adaptation of the Bible to the Malagasy mind, it should be remembered that while it is an Eastern book, the Malagasy are to a great extent an Eastern people. In their ancient form of government, in their tribal system, in their dress, their food, in their habits of thought, they are much more like the people of the Bible than we Western peoples are ; and therefore many things in the Scriptures for which *we* need explanation, and books about the Holy Land and Egypt and Arabia to make Bible narratives clear to us, are perfectly familiar to the Malagasy. To give only two or three illustrations : Those passages in the Proverbs, as well as in the historical books, speaking of absolute authority in the sovereign, such as, " The wrath of the king is as the roaring of a lion, but his favour is as the dew upon the grass," is just the old native idea of their former kings and queens. Soon after the promulgation of the laws against Christian worship in the reign of Queen Rànavàlona I, some of the people came to certain of the missionaries and asked if they did not tremble at the word of the sovereign. They replied that they were indeed grieved that the Queen wished to prevent the knowledge of the Word of God, but that they did not tremble, because after all the Queen was only human. The natives rejoined : " It may be well for you to say so, because you are white people ; but as for us Malagasy, when our sovereign frowns upon us we are as people soon dead ! " In confirmation of this extreme reverence felt for the sovereign, it must be remembered that the Hova kings and queens were styled *Andrìamànitra hìta màso*, " the god seen by the eye," the visible divinity.

In the first Psalm we read of the wicked being " like the chaff which the wind driveth away," a passage perfectly clear to every native of central and eastern Madagascar, for this is what they do every day after the rice is pounded and cleared of the husk. The contents of the mortar are tossed up in a large flat wooden dish on the west side of the house, so that the chaff may be blown away from the rice. So again, with the numerous passages in the Bible speaking of " girding up the loins," and " making bare the arm." The outer dress of the Malagasy, male and female, is the loose flowing *làmba*, very graceful in appearance, but not a working dress; so when they set to work, the *làmba* must be girded round the loins, and the arm left bare to go on with whatever task is at hand.

Very many other similarities between the habits and thoughts of the peoples spoken of throughout the Bible and those of the Malagasy might be adduced. And therefore the narratives of the Scriptures, and the parables, and much of its scenery, stand out vividly in their version of the Bible, and have a beauty and a reality to the native mind which is very striking. How often, as one has read or heard read the stories of the Old and the New Testament, have I not said, "How exactly like the Malagasy is all that! That's just what they would say and do!" Apart from the spiritual appeal which the Bible makes to the native mind and conscience, it is certainly a great advantage that in the outward dress and wording of the sacred volume there is so much also that makes it intelligible and attractive to our people.

Two or three more examples may be given of the similarity of Malagasy customs and ideas to those of the peoples of the Bible.

When passing the chief entrance to the palace yard, and noticing the crowd of people and officials sitting at the gateway (chiefly during my earlier years in Madagascar) I was often reminded of the Eastern custom of suitors for any favour or office "sitting at the king's gate" (2 Sam. xi. 9, etc.). This was seen also at the entrance of the houses of the highest officers of state. And just as in the East, those who seek to have justice done to them in any law-suit, have to wait and waylay the great men, and by their very importunity force them to attend to their cause (see Luke xviii. 1–5), so we have known women who have sat for days together at the palace gate, for the purpose of pressing their case upon the attention of high Government officers as they went in and out from the presence of the Queen. When a Malagasy sovereign went on a journey to any distant part of the island, she was always accompanied by an immense crowd of her subjects, including all the upper classes of the people, with their bearers and attendants. Like the Queen of Sheba, she went "with a very great train," "a very great company, she and her servants." On two or three royal "progresses" the number of these followers has amounted to as many as from 20,000 to 30,000 people! And in the preparations for these journeys we always had illustrations of many Scripture passages. As there were formerly no roads, properly speaking, in Madagascar, the local authorities along the line of march were responsible for improving the paths. The elevations were cut down, the hollows filled up, and the jungly grass and bushes were cleared out of the way. It was, in fact, an exact illustration of the words, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain."

Throughout the East it is indispensable, when seeking an interview with a person of authority or influence, that a present be brought to propitiate his favour; for "a man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men" (Prov. xviii. 16). It was exactly the same in Madagascar before foreign conquest; and as government officials had no regular and fixed salary, such presents were one of the chief means they had of keeping up their position. So that when coming to see us, their missionaries, the people usually brought some little offering—a bunch of bananas, half a dozen oranges or other fruit, or a chicken, etc.; and if they had nothing, they would make an elaborate apology for coming empty-handed. I often thought, when reading that story of Saul and his servant seeking his father's asses, how like it all was to Malagasy usages—their concern at finding they have nothing left to offer in approaching the great man, Samuel ("But, behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man? for the bread is spent, and there is not a present to bring to the man of God. What have we?"—1 Sam. ix. 7); the servant's finding a quarter-shekel; his master immediately appropriating it—all this was exactly true to the life, to what continually happened in Madagascar in former times. But such illustrations of the Bible from Malagasy life might be greatly multiplied.[1]

I wonder if anyone who happens to read these pages has ever tried to realize what it would be if he or she could read the Bible for the first time as an utterly new book ? Would it not be one of the great events in our lives to read its histories, its prophecies, its psalms, and above all, the four-fold story of that spotless Life revealed in the Gospels, and the gracious words from the Divine Teacher's lips, for the first time ! It is difficult to imagine what our wonder and delight would be. And yet I have often thought that I had something like that feeling in reading and teaching the old familiar Bible stories in another language. The well-known words, the life-like narratives, the graphic portraits of men and women with which the Scriptures abound, and which had been known from childhood in their English dress, seemed to come with new force and power and vivid colouring in the musical Malagasy speech. The new language seemed to make them fresh and new and more delightful even than before.

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[1] I tried to do this in the sixteenth chapter of my book, *The Great African Island*, under the title of "New Light on Old Texts: Illustrations of Scripture from Malagasy Customs."

Note.—At the time of the Centenary of the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1904, I took much trouble to arouse our Malagasy Christians to a sense of what they owed to that Society for the help it had given to them for many years, indeed from the first introduction of the Gospel into the island ; and this very happily united the different churches in the Capital. At the Anglican Cathedral, the Bishop conducted a short liturgical service ; my colleague, Mr. Sharman, read the lesson ; and a Quaker, Mr. H. E. Clark, gave a very appropriate address. At our chief L.M.S. Church, Ambàtonakànga, one of the S.P.G. clergy preached ; and at the Lutheran Church, one of the L.M.S. missionaries preached. On the following Sunday, special reference was made to the Bible and what it had done for Madagascar ; and on the Monday I delivered a lecture on the Bible and its work throughout the world, in one of our largest churches. At this the Superintendent of the Norwegian Mission presided, and Bishop King and most of his people were present. It was a true Evangelical Alliance.

CHAPTER XII

NATIVE PREACHERS, PREACHING, AND SERMONS

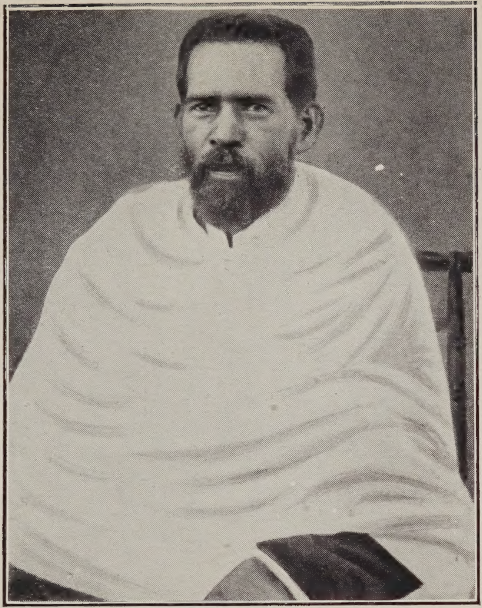
The Malagasy are ready and fluent speakers, and, as a rule, have little difficulty or hesitation in addressing an audience; and one never hears among them a phrase of apology occasionally heard here in England, "Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking." For they are fairly well accustomed to speak at any place or time, or before any assembly, large or small; and I have often been astonished to hear mere lads get up and speak in a very fluent and easy manner, and frequently with good sense too, in the same style as that in which they have heard their elders hold forth. It is true that this fluency of speech is often accompanied with poverty of thought, and some Malagasy have a considerable power of *saying* a great deal, and *meaning* a very little, and of hiding their real meaning under a cloud of words, reminding one of some one who said that "the object of words was to conceal thought." Still, for all that, the fact remains that the Malagasy can usually speak well and sensibly on most subjects; and this facility of speech no doubt has arisen from the fact that until the last ninety years they had no books or writing, and so their mental activity naturally found expression in speaking and in oratory. And there were frequent opportunities for them to employ this power in the numerous family and tribal and national meetings which were common in the former conditions of society in Madagascar. Among these were the gatherings at marriages, births, circumcision times, and funerals; the division and allotment of communal land; the apportionment to each one of his share of government service, such as fetching timber, or repairing the river embankments and the water-courses, etc.; and also the great assemblies called together to hear a royal proclamation, or the announcement of some new laws.

There were few occasions in the old time which were so interesting and exciting as a royal "*Kabàry.*" These were usually held in the open triangular space near the summit of the city hill and called Andohàlo (since the French conquest made a small park and covered with trees and flower beds). From early morning many thousand people would be assembled there, all sitting on the ground, while the houses and courtyards surrounding it would be filled with spectators. A small open space on the highest part of the area was left, reserved for the royal messengers and their attendants. At the appointed hour, the Prime Minister and a number of the officers of highest rank would be seen coming down on foot from the Palace, through a lane kept open by lines of soldiers, preceded and followed by troops and a military band of music. After a brief pause the Prime Minister draws his sword, moves a little in advance of his followers and gives the word of command for saluting the Queen, the soldiers presenting arms, the band playing the National Anthem, and the cannon firing. The officer next in rank would then give the word of command for saluting the Prime Minister, after which the real business of the day would commence. His Excellency would then give, sometimes at considerable length, the royal message, which often included some new laws or regulations, and was generally delivered with a good deal of natural eloquence.

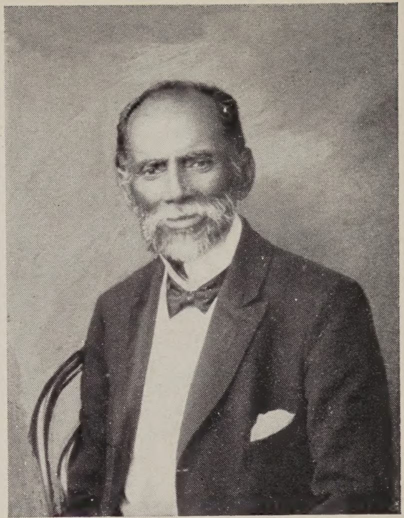
Then came the share of the people, by their chiefs and heads of tribes and districts, to reply to the royal message. In their order of rank and procedure, some half-dozen of each division of the tribes of Imèrina would advance in turn, and the chief man, girding his striped *làmba* round his waist, and brandishing a spear, replies, often repeating the main points of the proclamation, and giving assurances of obedience and loyalty. And at each rounded period of his speech, he turns round to his followers and the members of his clan and inquires, "*Fa tsy izày va?*" ("For isn't it so?"), to which there are shouts of "*Izày, Izày!*" ("'Tis so!") Such scenes were often very exciting, for sometimes a clever speaker would rouse up the whole assembly to a pitch of loyal enthusiasm; they would all leap to their feet, muskets would be thrown up into the air, and numbers of the people would dance about to show their approval of the message of their sovereign.

Now this oratorical power of the Malagasy has been brought by numbers of them into the service of the gospel, and for the uplifting of their countrymen; and it is not surprising that there have been, and still are, many of our native preachers who are able to deliver the divine message with fire and force and illumination, and whose services are much sought after for special occasions, such as church openings, Sunday School anniversaries, and at the Six-Monthly Meetings. In the Chapter IV of this book I gave some illustrations of Malagasy sermons (or portions of them) in the early time of my residence in the country; and here I want to give a few other examples of men who have occupied a prominent position as preachers up to a recent date, and of others who still are leaders among our churches.

For many years one of the best known and most popular Malagasy preachers was Andrìa-nài-vo-ra-vè-lona, a man belonging to one of the six noble clans or *andrìana.* He was somewhat heavy in appearance, but soon roused up into great earnestness and vivacity as he went on preaching, for he was a born orator, and had a wealth of illustration and a mastery of his own language that made him greatly sought after and admired by the people. He had a great knowledge of the Scriptures, and his treatment of texts was often most original and striking; while his intimate acquaintance with the habits and the ideas of the Malagasy enabled him to put the truths of the gospel before them in a way that few Europeans could ever equal. He was for long known among us as "the Spurgeon of Madagascar," and he often preached four or five times on a Sunday without any apparent fatigue. On one occasion, when there was some special subject which he wished to bring before the village churches of the district of which he and Mr. Briggs were really the bishops, he actually preached a short sermon on one Sunday to *twelve* different congregations! Of course, this was only done by having a set of bearers to carry him rapidly from village to village, and many of these places were near together.



RAINITÌARAY, MALAGASY PASTOR



RADANIÈLA, MALAGASY PASTOR
AND TUTOR

MALAGASY PASTORS AND PREACHERS

Andrìanaivo—for his long name was often so abbreviated—sometimes signed himself as " Joseph A.," for the former name was the one by which he was baptized; and since that was done when he was a youth, at one of the secret night meetings, and to guard against any betrayal—for these were often in semi-darkness—he was addressed as " Joseph A." that it might not be known who he was. His was the very first name on the list of students at the L.M.S. College; and the intellectual training he there received must have been invaluable to a man who was naturally clever and yet had so few educational advantages when young. In the revision of the Malagay Bible, Andrìanaivo gave very valuable assistance on all knotty questions; and numbers of the most happy phrases in that Bible are due to his taste and good judgment and knowledge of his native language. He was also a prolific hymn-writer, and some of the greatest favourites in our hymn-book were written by him, most of them being adapted to well-known English tunes.

In his earlier years, Andrìanaivo sometimes yielded to the temptation of amusing his audience, or holding them spellbound by deeply interesting tales, most graphically told. But later years saw much improvement in this respect, for he was greatly influenced by a revival among the churches of the Capital in 1892, in which he took a prominent part; and his sermons became much simpler, as he tried in an earnest manner to preach Christ so as to win sinners to Him, and it was always his most prayerful and sincere desire to save souls. He was also a very enthusiastic temperance worker, and thousands of people signed the total abstinence pledge through the persuasive addresses he delivered in different parts of the country.

On account of Andrìanaivo's great influence, the French authorities at the conquest were suspicious that this might be used against them, although I am convinced that he never said or did anything disloyal to the new régime. He was therefore banished to Réunion, at the same time as the Prime Minister and others of the native Government, and died there not very long afterwards. He was greatly missed and mourned by all the Malagasy churches, as well as by his European fellow-workers.

A very different man from Andrìanaivo was Ràhanàmy (better known latterly as Rainimànga), also for many years a very popular and clever Malagasy preacher. He was a tall and dark-coloured man, one of the tribe called "Mainty," i.e. "Black," and an example of the Melanesian or Negroid element in the Malagasy peoples. He had a very peculiar and striking style of oratory, which was marked by large use of an antithetic arrangement of words in his sentences, piling on one contrast after another in a remarkable way. His power of using simile and proverb and illustration was really marvellous, and gave one a very high idea of the capabilities of the Malagasy language. And this style of speaking always appeared to be involuntary and unavoidable to him, for it came in not only in preaching and speaking, but in his public prayers also. These, as far as I could judge, never appeared to be premeditated or artificial, but seemed to be the natural outcome of his mental habit, so that he could not speak in a different way. The Malagasy are fond of employing something of that style as an occasional variety in their public speaking, but I never heard anyone with whom it was habitual, as was the case with Rainimànga. It was greatly admired by the people; and he, together with Andrìanàivoravèlona and a third native preacher, was for many years chaplain to the two Christian Queens, Rànavàlona II and Rànavàlona III, and either preached themselves every Sunday or arranged for the two Sunday services in the Royal Chapel. The preaching of each of these three men was greatly appreciated by both those sovereigns.

And the mention of that church reminds me that we English missionaries were occasionally asked to preach before the Malagasy sovereign, and I have had that duty three or four times. And this was also the custom: on the Saturday preceding the Sunday when one had to officiate, a large piece of beef was sent to the preacher's house, presumably to give him strength for his duty on the following day. And on the Monday the preacher's fee was sent to him, in the shape of tenpence! And this, I fancy, was intended as the payment for the four bearers who would carry one's palanquin to and from the Palace Yard. On coming out of the Royal Chapel, we were always asked to stand in the vestibule to meet her Majesty, who would shake hands with us and thank us for our discourse.

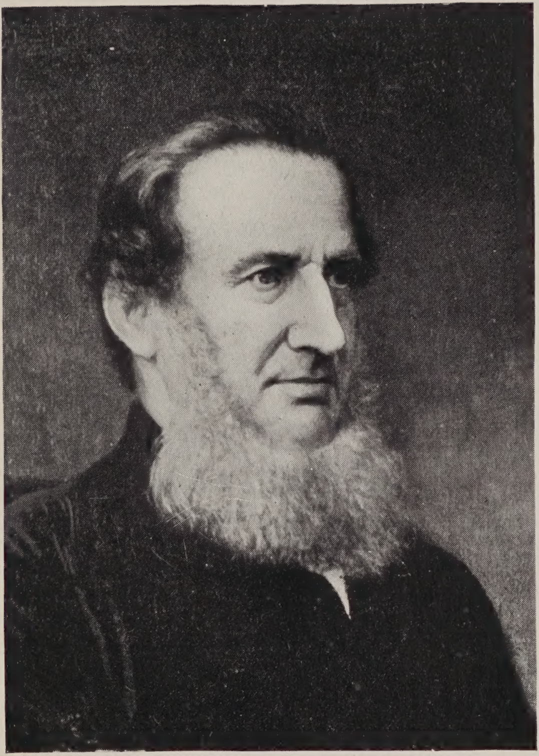
At the time of the first Franco-Malagasy War (1883–1885), two or three young preachers made themselves notorious, not to say popular, with many people by delivering passionate and fiery harangues, full of violent invective, against the French, and taking as a motto the words of Naboth to King Ahab, " The Lord forbid it me that I shall give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee " ; the vineyard, of course, being Madagascar, and the French the envious Ahab.

At another time, several young men also amused and astonished their audiences by taking single words as texts, such as " Although," " If," " But," etc. ; one orator taking, I was told, the A B C, and so on, of the alphabet, as his subject! But the good sense of the great majority of Malagasy worshippers did not approve of such tricks of oratory, and of such " handling the Word of God deceitfully " ; and for many years we have never heard again of such misplaced and irreverent cleverness.

We have, on the contrary, a great many able, well-instructed, gifted and eloquent native preachers. Among these I may mention Andrìamànana, pastor of the city church of Ankàdibévàva ; one of whose sermons many years ago I well remember, from the text, " The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree " ; and in which the resemblances between the two were worked out in a most ingenious and appropriate and beautiful manner. So with another and younger man, Rakòtonirainy, pastor of another city church, who gave us at a *Lòha vòlana* service, a remarkably clever and instructive sermon of some length from the story of Nabal and Abigail and David. So also I might mention my late old friend and colleague, Radaniéla, pastor of Fàravòhitra Memorial Church, and for thirty years our assistant tutor at the College ; and also my late friend, Rainitìarày, pastor of Ampàribé. Others of my colleagues in collegiate work are also well worthy of mention, as Rabétàfika (a son of Andrìanaìvoravèlona), pastor of Ambàtonakànga Memorial Church, who, at a service in commemoration of the opening of the building, gave us a most ingenious and remarkably clever address, in which he made every part of the church, foundations, walls, columns, arches, windows, tower, spire, etc., all emblematic of some spiritual truth. Another colleague was Rabàry, pastor of one of the city churches, from whom I have heard several very earnest and faithful sermons. And among the younger men are such as Joseph Andrìanàivoravèlona, a son of "our Malagasy Spurgeon," and Rakòtovao, a nephew and son-in-law of the same celebrated preacher, in both of whom the preaching power seems to have been inherited. The last-named one was for several years my colleague at the Anàlakèly church, where he still is after twenty years' service; and several sermons I have heard from his lips were always most thoughtfully and carefully worked out, pretty closely read, but delivered with great freedom and effect. But it seems almost invidious to mention names, when I recall others also to whom I have listened with delight; and probably every one of my missionary brethren could speak of others equally worthy of praise. I can say without the slightest hesitation that for ingenious planning, appropriate and telling illustration, and earnestness of purpose, the sermons I have frequently heard from my Malagasy brethren were quite equal to anything I remember from English preachers.

Perhaps someone may ask, Can foreigners preach and impress Malagasy congregations much in the same way as their own countrymen can do? Yes, many have done so, and still do; and although *we* cannot thoroughly enter into native ideas and habits of thought, yet we have certain advantages from our wider culture and knowledge and our broader view of things. Some years ago, when talking with a native friend about the different merits of Malagasy and English preaching, he said: "Of course, you Europeans do not understand our inner life and mind as we do ourselves, but there is always one thing that impresses us when you preach, and that is, *your earnestness*!" I was very thankful to hear that, and to feel that our Malagasy hearers —some of them, at least—did realize that we, like that old Hebrew judge, can still say, "I have a message from God unto thee."

I will not here mention the names of my missionary brethren still living and now in Madagascar, who are effective



REV. WM. ELLIS

and popular preachers; but I may say a word about two or three who have passed away to their rest, and who were a great power in Madagascar for many years. My late friend, the late Rev. Charles Jukes, was a born preacher, and had a great gift in using apt and striking illustrations in his sermons, and was always listened to with great delight by the people. So also with another brother, the late Rev. Joseph Pearse, whose weighty, earnest, and instructive sermons were also highly appreciated by the Malagasy; many of them were afterwards printed and circulated in large numbers. I never had the opportunity of hearing my good friend, the late Rev. Wm. Montgomery preach, but I understand that he spoke sometimes like one inspired, and produced a deep impression in his addresses.[1]

And occasionally, even in the imperfections of our use of the Malagasy language, good has been effected; for a Malagasy told one of my brethren that he had been converted through a sermon of good Mr. Ellis. My friend was surprised to hear this, because we all knew that Mr. Ellis had a very imperfect knowledge of Malagasy (no wonder, because he was nearly seventy when he began to use it for speaking and preaching), and the people were often puzzled to know what he was saying. "It is quite true," said the man to my friend, "that I did not understand much of the sermon, but the impressive and solemn manner in which Mr. Ellis repeated his text again and again so deeply moved me that I became a changed man from that day."

Another incident may also be given as illustrating what was said in the preceding paragraph. A member of the Society of Friends on his way to Madagascar to take part in their mission in the country, Mr. S. Clemes, had the opportunity on the voyage out of learning a good deal of Malagasy from missionaries who had been there before and were returning to their work. On arriving at Tamatave, Mr. Clemes was so anxious to begin to do something for the good of the people that he preached to them in the native chapel before leaving for the Capital. Naturally, the congregation did not understand much of what he said, but his attempt to preach so soon made a deep impression on the native

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[1] I ought not to omit from this mention of able English preachers the name of my colleague in several matters, the late Rev. Richard Baron.

Christians there. "What an earnest, good man this foreigner must be," they said; "he has only just come to us, and yet he has already begun to try and do us good, although he knows so little of our language, while many of us here, who know our own tongue well, have hardly used it at all to try and make known the gospel to others!"

May we not say that in such facts we have illustrations of the Apostle's words, "The weakness of God is stronger than men, and the foolishness of God is wiser than men"? and that He can use even our imperfection and weakness if there is a sincere desire to do good to our fellow-men?

Malagasy preachers almost always have clear and distinct divisions in their sermons, and largely keep to the good old-fashioned style of "introduction, and first, second and thirdly," although occasionally these go on to several more than the "thirdly." I believe that our preaching classes at the College have done and will continue to do great good to our preachers and pastors; for the students are carefully trained, in every sermon they prepare for the class, to ask themselves, "What do I seek to do in preaching from this text? What is its aim and object?" etc.; and those who ignore such a practical outcome of their discourse will be sharply criticized by their fellows in class.

The work of our L.M.S. Theological College is described pretty fully in Chapter IX, and here it may be noticed that during the last ten or twelve years we have felt obliged to do yet something more for the large number of native preachers, especially those in the country districts, of whom there are above 1,800 in the central province of Imèrina. A large proportion of these are engaged in business or agricultural work, and have not been able to give that up for four years' training at the College. But it occurred to us that probably a considerable number of them would be able and very willing to give two or three days, say every fortnight, to attend classes at various centres in the country, if these could be arranged. We made the experiment, and were very glad to find that a large number of country pastors and preachers responded to our invitation and asked to be enrolled, promising to attend as regularly as possible. Several of these "Pastoral Classes" were accordingly started; and one of these I conducted at my old station, Ambòhimànga, for about two years, and a quarter.

When it is remembered that before the French conquest there were about 1,200 congregations connected with the L.M.S., besides 150 or 160 others under the care of the Friends' Mission, mostly supplied from ourselves, it will be obvious that our students from the College, averaging eight or ten only every year, could not supply pastors for a large proportion of the congregations. And yet the advance of education and enlightenment among the people made it increasingly necessary that the preachers, as well as the pastors, should be better instructed. A programme of study was prepared by the committee, which would require fully two years to go through, since the classes were discontinued in the College and school vacations ; and examinations were held at the end of each term of study to test the ability of each student. Our curriculum included teaching on outlines of Scripture, History, Hermeneutics, Theology, Protestantism, Conduct of Public Worship, Church Officers and the Sacraments, etc., and especially Sermon Composition and Criticism and the great Aim of Preaching.

I used to leave home every other Wednesday morning, in the cold season before it was quite light,[1] at a little before six o'clock, and after two and a half hours' ride, reach Ambòhimànga so as to commence work by nine o'clock. We took two subjects in the morning, two more in the afternoon, and two more on Thursday morning. That day was market-day at Ambòhimànga, so we began early and closed early, so that the men could go to the market and have time to return home by nightfall. Some of my students came from a day's journey away, and those who had to pass the night in the town had a trifling sum given to help with their lodging, and all were given " a good Samaritan twopence " for the midday meal on Wednesday. The class-books were supplied to them at half the published price.

At my first class fifty men came to be written down as regular students, and their number gradually increased to about one hundred. The attendance varied according to the season of the year ; rice-planting, harvest, etc., requiring the help of most of them, but it averaged about seventy. I was much interested in this class, and did my utmost to make it instructive and valuable to the men. The hardest work connected with it was the going through the examination papers at the end of each term, five or six sets of papers, of a hundred each, and many of these not in the plainest handwriting. But I have reason to believe that much good was done by it and by others conducted by my brethren in different centres, and that the standard of intelligence on the part of our country preachers has been greatly raised.

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[1] This early rising, some time before daylight, gave me several opportunities during the year 1911 of seeing the magnificent comet, which appeared that year, although very little seen in England. Its tail extended from the horizon to nearly the zenith and was a most wonderful sight.

The evangelistic zeal of some of our Malagasy Christians has not been contented with preaching the gospel in churches and other buildings, but many of them have felt impelled to preach out of doors, especially in the great open-air markets and in other places. One good man of this earnest spirit often gave ten or twelve short addresses in the day ; he had had no training of any kind, but used constantly to pray, after one of his talks, " O Lord, give me my next message ! "

Another itinerating preacher of the same stamp was, not very long ago, preaching in the open air in one of the large villages in the Bétsiléo province. This outdoor preaching or speaking is illegal in France and its colonies, and therefore also in Madagascar. While he was still speaking the police came up and asked what he was doing. He replied, " I am making known the Word of God." " Who sent you here ? " they inquired. " No one sent me, but this book commands me to preach." " Then why don't you go and do so in the proper place, in the church ? " they asked. He replied, " My book says, ' be instant in season and out of season ' ; ' in season,' that means, in the church ; ' out of season,' that means, in the street or market, or anywhere else where people will listen." They said, " Well, if you go on speaking here, we shall take you to prison." " What am I to do, then ? " he replied, " for my book tells me to obey God rather than man : I shall obey God." So he was taken away and imprisoned for six months. But this only gave him a new field of usefulness, for he was able during that time to make the gospel known to many dark-minded and ignorant people from distant tribes, and he taught some of them to read. At length he was released, and the

French Protestant missionary who had seen him apprehended met him and asked, " What are you going to do now ? Are you stopping preaching ? " " Oh, no," he replied. " My book says, ' If they persecute you in one city, flee to another.' I am going into the next province." And so this simple-minded man, with little knowledge, but much zeal, follows in a child-like way what he believes to be God's will, not caring much whether he is in prison or out of it, if he can only make known the good news.

Many years before the French occupation there was a little society of earnest young men and women who used to go about preaching. They called themselves " Soldiers of Salvation," and I fancy must have adopted this name from having heard about the " Salvation Army " in England, and so they tried to adopt some of its methods, without, however, anything like the elaborate organization of that admirable society.

About the year 1884 there was a Malagasy Preachers' Union formed in the Capital, which did much good and continued its work for several years. Three or four Christian young men were impressed by the spiritual poverty of many of the country places, which had then few instructed preachers and enjoyed very little gospel teaching. They therefore decided to commence systematic efforts to help a few of the village congregations; then they gradually induced others to assist them, so that after some time the Union numbered seventy members. Their object was simply the regular preaching of the gospel in necessitous places. Their plan was to set off in little companies in various directions very early every Sunday morning, gradually diverging as the paths branched off on either hand. At every chapel they passed they inquired if a preacher had come, or was coming that day, and in case no one was expected, one of their number stayed there to supply the lack of service, while the rest pushed on to other villages, making similar inquiries, until all or most of the company found work for the day. Every preacher travelled on foot, and would receive neither fee nor reward, or even a meal of rice, from the congregation, so that the perfect disinterestedness of their help might be unquestioned. They often travelled ten or twelve miles and back again in the day.

For a considerable time all the expenses of the Union were borne by themselves alone, or by subscriptions among their own number and their personal friends. For some time also this Union maintained one of its members as a native missionary in a dark and heathen portion of the country, where he and his wife did excellent service until obliged to leave through the opposition of the Hova Governor of the district, who became jealous of their influence over the people.

After working quietly for several years it occurred to the members that as the expenses of the Union increased from the wide extension of their work, they might raise funds for it by getting up a sacred concert. The use of the Memorial Church of Ampàmarìnana was granted them by our committee, and also that of the lecture hall of our College for the practices and rehearsals. As this was a purely native affair, we, especially those of us who lived in the College, and occasionally peeped in at the practices, looked forward to the concert with considerable interest.

On the appointed afternoon we and many of our missionary friends, duly provided with reserved seat tickets (at sixpence each), found our way to the church, which was nearly filled with people, the majority admitted by tickets at one penny, but a considerable number also having paid the higher sum. There was a large choir, both of male and female singers, and a band consisting of fifes, trumpets, key-bugles, clarionets and drums, as well as the church harmonium. The concert commenced with a short address and prayer, and then began the music, which much resembled a "service of song," and consisted of solos, duets and quartets, accompanied by the instruments, and with frequent choruses. The effect of the whole was very satisfactory ; and although a scientific musician would probably have found much to criticize, yet to our uncritical ears it was extremely pleasing, and seemed to comprise a great variety, as well as appropriateness to the various themes. The chief subjects of the whole service were the needs of the people, the commands of Christ, and the duty of Christians to proclaim the gospel. The musical portions were interspersed with short and very earnest addresses, carefully prepared, and leading up to the music which was immediately to follow. The whole was taken by the Malagasy themselves, except one brief prayer.

Besides the instruction and pleasure addressed to the *ear*, there was also something for the *eye*, for one of the members, with some artistic power, had prepared four large coloured pictures to illustrate and enforce the sentiment of the musical pieces. These pictures were held up at the appropriate places in the service. The first showed a native preacher in *làmba*, hat, and with umbrella, sitting on a rock, weary and hungry with his long journey in travelling out into the country to preach. The next picture was of a village church, with roof and windows very much out of repair, the congregation waiting outside for a preacher, who does *not* appear. At length they say to the elder men, "Come, we may as well go home; no one is coming to preach to us to-day." The third illustration was a very good reproduction of some European picture of the Crucifixion. This was simply the figure of our Lord on the cross, strongly contrasted against a dark background, and produced quite a sensation among the audience. The fourth picture was one of Christ commanding the eleven Apostles to go and preach the gospel to all nations, probably also taken from some English engraving, as the figure of the Saviour had the *nimbus* round the head. Some friends who were nearer to it told me that the Apostles all had Malagasy hats, but this no doubt would make it more realistic to the people. Anyhow, these pictures were extremely creditable to the artist, and added much to the interest of the service.

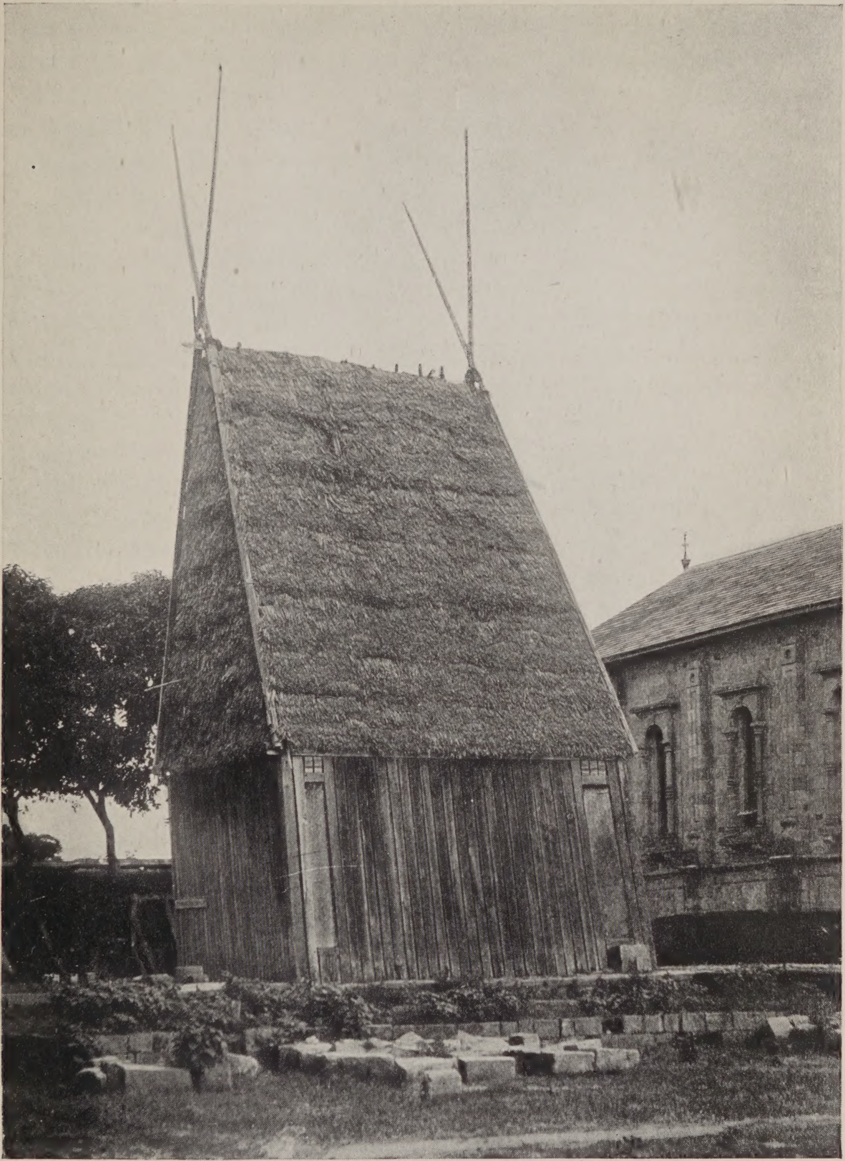
At the conclusion I was asked to say a few words, in which I expressed our great pleasure at what we had heard, especially that the Malagasy Christians were making exertions for the evangelization of their own country. About sixty dollars was raised by this concert, and it was afterwards, by the Queen's command, given again before her Majesty and her Court in one of the palaces, the Queen and the Prime Minister giving a handsome donation to the funds of the Union.

In confirmation of my own judgment as to the ability of many of our Malagasy preachers, I will add the testimony of my dear friend, the late Rev. J. Pearse, himself a most popular preacher. In a paper he contributed some years ago to our *Antanànarivo Annual,* he says :

" Some of these men are intelligent and faithful preachers. The following is an outline of a sermon to which I listened from one of them. The subject of his discourse was Salvation, from the text ' God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation,' etc. In his treatment of the subject, this native preacher had six divisions, which were : (1) Salvation is a good thing ; (2) Salvation is to be found in one Person only ; (3) Salvation is sufficiently abundant for all to partake of it ; (4) Salvation is not to be paid for, but is a free gift ; (5) Salvation has not to be fetched from afar, but can be had just where you are ; (6) Salvation is ours the moment we believe in Jesus Christ. Enlarging on each of these particulars, this man laid before the people very earnestly and faithfully the way of salvation through our Lord.

" The aid of illustrations is often called in by our native preachers to unfold the meaning of the text, or to carry home and enforce its lessons. These illustrations vary much in their value and force, and in their correctness and beauty. In the class of inferior ones, the reader will probably place the following : One of our good men was preaching from the text ' Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves ' ; and in explaining the reference to the wolves being in ' sheep's clothing,' he said, ' Sheep in that part of the world have their wool cut off every year, and the wind often blows at the time and scatters some of the wool. The wolves watch their time and opportunity, and having previously rolled in sticky mud and covered their bodies with it, they come to the place where this scattered wool is lying about. They then roll in it, and the wool adhering to the mud gives them the appearance of sheep ; and in this condition they craftily enter the flock as members of the fraternity and ensnare the poor sheep ! '

" The following is better—I venture to think really good. The preacher was wanting to influence the congregation to rid themselves of all selfishness in seeking to get to heaven, and to encourage them to use efforts to take others with them. He had recently returned from a visit



Chapel Royal

ANCIENT ROYAL HOUSE, ANTANÀNARÌVO

to Antanànarìvo, and while there he had been privileged to go inside the Queen's Palace. 'I went,' he said, 'to the Palace. How shall I tell you about it? How shall I describe what I saw? I cannot do it. It is beyond my powers of description. It was surpassingly grand. What mirrors! What sofas! What chairs! What ornaments! What bright decorations! On this side, and on that side, and all around, there was everything that the heart could wish for, and all that the soul could desire. While I was admiring all this, a voice seemed to say to me: "R——, this is a fine place! This is grand! This is splendid! Would you like to live here?" I seemed to reply, "Yes, certainly, I should like to live here."' And then he added, 'Again the same voice seemed to speak and say: "But, R——, if you were the only inhabitant of this beautiful place? If you had to live here alone? If neither your wife, nor your children, nor any of your relatives or friends were with you to keep you company, would you still like to live here? Would you be happy here?"' In answer to these inquiries he said, 'I seemed passionately to exclaim, "No, no! The beauty would not satisfy me. The grandeur would not make me glad. The ease and the glittering ornaments would not make me happy. No; if I had not someone for my companion, and there were not others to share it with me, I should be miserable, even in this beautiful palace."' "

CHAPTER XIII

A SUNDAY IN ANTANÀNARÌVO; AND SOME STRANGE SUNDAYS IN MADAGASCAR

It may not be uninteresting to describe briefly a Sunday in the capital city; how it appears to a visitor from Europe, and a few points in which Christian congregations of Malagasy resemble or differ from those in England.

It may be truthfully said that the day of rest and worship is kept there as well as in most English towns, and probably there is quite as large a percentage of the population found attending divine service in Antanànarìvo as there is in London. The Capital is fairly well supplied with places of worship, for in the city and its suburbs there are no fewer than thirty-nine churches. Of these twenty-three, including four stone churches, are connected with the L.M.S. Mission; four with the Anglicans, including a cathedral, five with the Roman Catholics, including also a cathedral; five with the French Protestant Society; while the Norwegian, Lutheran, and the Friends' missions have one church each. There is also a mosque for the Arab and Indian Mohammedans.

Sunday services begin in the great majority of these churches at nine o'clock, although in the Anglican and Roman places there are earlier "celebrations" of the sacrament; and, as a rule, the greater part of the congregations are assembled at that hour; so that from eight to nine o'clock the streets are pretty full of people, dressed in their best, and numbers of the women and children with their Bibles and Testaments and hymn-books in their hands, ready to take their part in the worship. Four or five of the largest L.M.S. and other churches will have congregations of from 500 to 600 people; so that if we look, for instance, into my own church, Anàlakèly, we shall usually find almost every seat on the ground floor occupied, while the large end gallery is only used on special occasions. In all the city churches, and now also in the majority of the village places, open benches with backs are provided, instead of the rush mats which used to be the only seating in earlier times.

Malagasy families do not sit together in church; the men and boys are seated on one side, and the women and girls and young children on the other. This division of the sexes is in accord with old native custom, and we have seen no reason to suggest any alteration. But it must be said that everywhere women are the great majority of the congregation, generally numbering from two-thirds to three-fourths of the whole attendance.

It would be noticed that almost every woman wears the graceful national *làmba* over her other dress. This is simply from two to three yards of white calico, often lined for greater warmth with coloured print, while on special occasions many of the ladies wear *làmbas* of figured silk or satin of various light shades of colour, often with handsome gold bracelets, chains and rings, etc. The women do not wear bonnets; their black hair is neatly plaited in one or other of two or three simple styles of coiffure now in use, and a few will carry parasols or sunshades to protect themselves on very hot days. In some churches a native lady, wife of a government official, will dress in European fashion, but they look much nicer in the simpler native dress.

The majority of the men still retain the *làmba* over European dress, but those employed in the shops and offices of foreigners omit the *làmba*, while government officials wear their appropriate uniform. The younger boys now largely leave off the native dress and are clad in knickerbocker suits.

Our L.M.S. churches mostly have a raised platform with railings, spacious enough for several people to sit there—"the chief places in the synagogue"—a large desk, often resting on well-carved wood supports, serving as the pulpit, while the Communion table is on a lower platform before it, often with benches or seats for the deacons at the celebration of the Lord's Supper. About thirty years ago, when designing the fittings for our church of Anàlakèly, I introduced a new fashion, arranging a fairly ornate pulpit on one side of the stone platform, and a reading-desk or lectern on the other side, with the Communion table in the centre on a lower level. I did this to give greater prominence and honour to the reading of the Holy Scriptures in public worship, and to show it to be a very important part of the service. I also, as I had done long before at the first Memorial Church, placed a carved stone font on the platform, in order to emphasize the sacrament of baptism. I also arranged shallow arcading in the wall behind the platform, in the panels of which were painted the Ten Commandments of the old law, and the two great commands of the new law, the Apostles' Creed, and two or three great foundation texts of the gospel, so that the eyes of the worshippers might be taught as well as their ears. This arrangement has commended itself to many Malagasy congregations, and in designing several new churches, I have been asked to carry out the same plan for them.

Our congregations stand to sing and sit to hear and to pray, although many of us would like to get the people to kneel at prayer ; this, however, is not very easy to arrange, although the native Christians of the former time evidently used that reverent form of worship, for old Malagasy would always kneel to pray when coming into the church. Singing is a great attraction to the natives, and of late years almost every church, even in small villages, has managed to purchase a harmonium, and nearly everywhere someone will be found who can play it more or less correctly. The singing in the earlier times of the re-established mission has already been noticed in Chapter IV. Most of the tunes to be heard in L.M.S. churches would be recognized immediately as taken from English hymnals, those from Sankey's collection being most popular and suited to the people's tastes.

The Order of Service in most churches is very similar to that followed by the majority of the free churches in England. Many years ago I prepared a manual giving about a dozen groups of Scripture passages suitable to be read at the commencement of a service, as well as those for special occasions, such as Christmas Day, Good Friday, Easter, etc. But it must also be noted that it is an old-established custom that the first thing to be heard at the commencement of a Sunday service is to sing the "Second hymn" in the hymn book, a favourite old composition from the time of the first missionaries, much wanting in proper rhythm, and a free translation of "All people that on earth do dwell." Equally, also, it was for long considered that the service was not properly concluded without singing another of the old hymns, a free translation of "Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing." More freedom in these respects is gradually prevailing, as the older people, fond of the old associations, pass away.

Scripture lessons are, of course, read; and several years ago, noticing how often favourite and familiar chapters were constantly read in our churches, leaving the wide field of the Bible greatly unused, and, it is to be feared, largely unknown, I read a paper at one of the Six-Monthly Union meetings advocating the use of a Lectionary, so that there might be systematic and regular reading of all the portions of the Scriptures suitable for reading at divine service. My arguments were favourably received, and I was requested to preface such a lectionary for use in our churches. This was done for several years, and printed copies were distributed to all our congregations. For many years I prepared, specially for use in my own district, tables of Scripture lessons, so that by reading these at morning and afternoon service on every Sunday throughout the year, nearly the whole Bible would be read through at public worship in four years. I am quite sure that in this way large portions of the Word of God previously unknown to the majority of the worshippers were thus made known to them. Of course, in order to realize fully such a result, an intelligent and sympathetic reader is required.

In public prayer, the greater portion is still extemporary; but there is a growing feeling in favour of some form of liturgical service to supplement free prayer. This also I have advocated at the Six-Monthly meeting, and a service-book has for many years been in use, especially for the conduct of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, for marriage and burial services, for ordinations and other special occasions, together with a form of general thanksgiving. For while most of my elder missionary brethren, and the older Malagasy also, were conservative in their ways, and not very favourable to change, both among the younger brethren and the young Malagasy pastors there is a desire that the congregation should have an audible part in public prayer by the use of responses and a simple litany. This feeling is sure to grow, and with undoubted benefit to more intelligent worship. In the small service-book just referred to, a number of the beautiful benedictions given in the New Testament, and especially in the Pauline Epistles, were arranged so as to give more variety to the concluding part of the service ; and also a number of ascriptions suitable for use at the conclusion of the sermon. For some years past there has been an increasing practice for the congregation to join audibly in the Lord's Prayer when repeated by the officiating minister.

Singing has always been a most favourite and attractive part of divine worship to the Malagasy. The first missionaries prepared a hymn-book containing 168 hymns,[1] written either by themselves or by some of their converts ; and, as has been the case ever since the time when the earliest Christians "sang hymns to Christ as God," so in Madagascar the "praying people" have always been also the "singing people." Many of the hymns in that first Malagasy hymnal, as already remarked in Chapter IV, had the most sacred associations to the first believers in the island.

It is no wonder, therefore, that those first hymns were very precious to the older Malagasy Christians, and were sung again by them with delight when the country was reopened to religious worship in 1862. Notwithstanding their faulty rhythm, there was a depth of feeling and an evangelical fervour about them that made them a very real means of grace.

But these earliest hymns not being rhythmical, but simply prose with the proper number of syllables in each line, it was sometimes painful to have to spoil the language in giving the proper accent to the tune ; for the accents of the music and of the language were quite discordant. This great defect in the hymnology was soon felt by those of us who recommenced the mission in 1862 and following years, and some attempt was made to recast a few of the old hymns. But several members of the new staff of missionaries began to write proper metrical hymns, a matter which was found to be quite practicable, and also to give them rhyme. (As regards the earliest hymns and tunes, see Chapter IV, pp. 48-50.)

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[1] Five editions of this were printed before 1862 ; of the second edition (1836) 4,500 copies were printed.

The L.M.S. missionaries of the re-established mission were therefore the pioneers of rhythmical hymn-writing, the late Rev. R. G. Hartley, M.A., being the first to write several, both in rhythm and rhyme. His lead was soon followed by Messrs. Toy, W. E. Cousins, Richardson (the most prolific of all our hymn-writers), Houlder, Baron, Price, and several others, including several ladies, viz. Miss Amy Brockway, Mrs. George Peake, and Mrs. Rowlands. Many of these hymns are very popular, and are sung all over the island, wherever there is any knowledge at all of Christianity, for they have largely become the songs of the people, and may be heard even where no regular Christian worship has been commenced. This wide diffusion of hymns has been greatly promoted by the knowledge of the Sol-fa system of music, first introduced by Mr. Toy, but much more by Mr. Richardson, who taught it in the Normal School in Antanànarìvo, and from which his pupils have carried it all over the country.

It is worthy of notice, too, that one of the earliest metrical hymns was written by a Quaker, Mr. J. S. Sewell, while other hymns were composed by him and two other members of the Friends' Mission.

But hymn-writing has by no means been confined to Europeans, for many of the most excellent and popular hymns in our hymnal have been written by Malagasy. In speaking of native preachers, the name of one of them, Andrìanàivoravèlona, has been specially mentioned; and in addition to his remarkable gifts as a preacher, he was also a very ready and excellent hymn-writer. Over thirty of his compositions are included in our hymn-book: indeed, he seems to have been able to write a hymn very rapidly and correctly for any special occasion. Many other hymns by Malagasy are found in our hymnal, and it is astonishing how easy it appears for them to compose new and appropriate hymns for Sunday School anniversaries and special occasions.

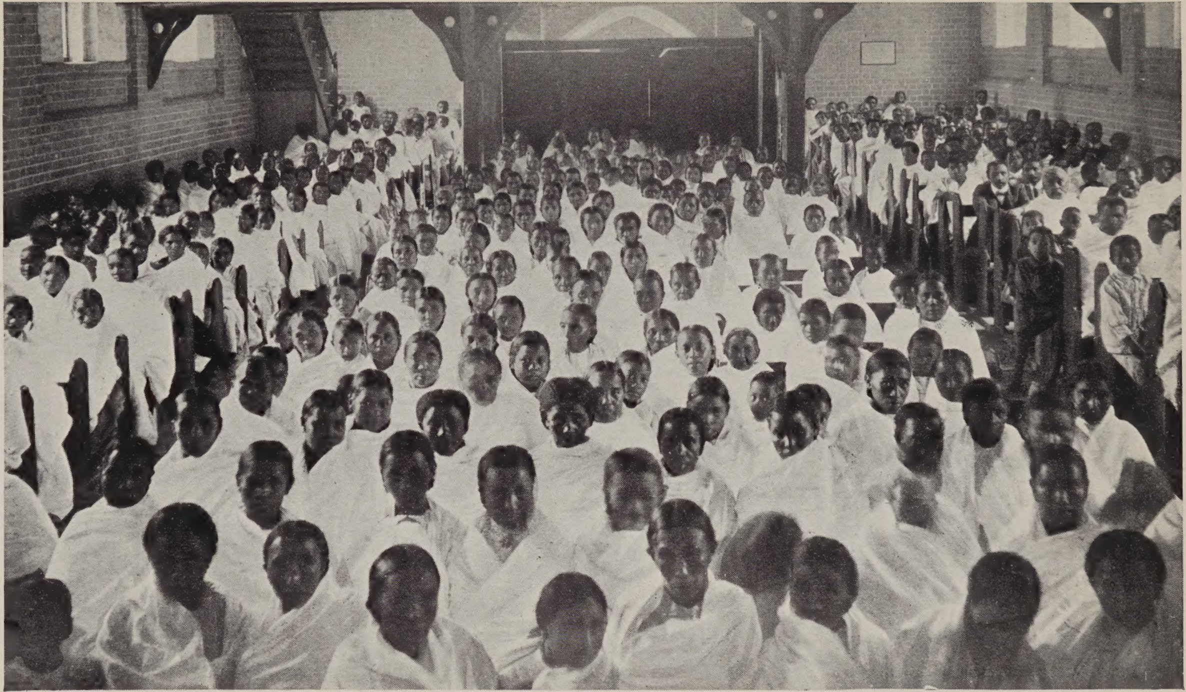
It need hardly be said that other missions have also their own hymn-books ; those in use among the Norwegians and the Anglicans including several hymns from our own collection, so that we can easily join with them—the former especially—in occasional services in their or our own churches.

With regard to the Sermons heard in our Malagasy churches, that subject has been already sufficiently treated in Chapter XII.

The reverent and seemly observation of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper by our Malagasy churches of the present day has been already mentioned in this chapter ; but it may be of interest to note down some of the superstitious ideas respecting both the Sacraments which grew up during an earlier period of missionary effort. As shown in a previous chapter, Malagasy idolatry was mainly a belief in *òdy* or charms, charms to prevent evil of various kinds, or to obtain certain benefits ; so it is easy to see that to those newly come out of heathenism, their superstitious ideas are readily transferred to the two great symbolic ordinances of the Christian religion, and that these are soon regarded as Christian *òdy* or charms. Until carefully instructed, unenlightened people are almost certain to regard the Sacraments as means of obtaining some vague benefit, quite irrespective of the moral condition of those receiving them.

And so we have had people coming up from the country districts saying they wished "to pray to the baptism," while others have asked that they might "drink baptism," probably confounding the two Sacraments together. Even among our more intelligent Christian people it was curious to see what superstitious notions sometimes were attached to the symbols.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was also quite as liable to abuse by more enlightened people. Thus I have been asked by a pastor, a very intelligent and earnest Christian man, whether the deacons might not carry to those in sickness a portion of the bread and a small quantity of the wine, so that those at home might still partake of the Sacrament. This seemed at first sight a very reasonable request, but on



SUNDAY MORNING, ANÀLAKÈLY CHURCH

further consideration I saw how the sacred elements would inevitably come to be regarded as a kind of charm, as something having a mysterious virtue in themselves But it is easy to understand how, from such, at first, most innocent and natural feelings, the practice of the " reserved sacrament " grew up in the early churches, together with many other superstitious notions about it.

I found also at Ambòhimànga, my first mission station, that several of my own people thought that they ought to fast from all food on the Sunday morning before communicating. For many years most of our congregations thought that the Lord's Supper should only be observed on Sunday, and in the forenoon only, and would have been as much shocked as an English High Churchman professes to be, at an " evening Communion." Happily, with the growth of knowledge, such superstitious ideas have almost entirely passed away ; and it is now very common to hold a sacramental service as the fitting close of the Four-Monthly and other meetings ; and a large united Communion of the churches in the Capital has for several years been customary on the afternoon of the Thursday preceding Good Friday.

In an evangelistic tour made many years ago by two of our best students at the College to the Antsihànaka province, they found some curious practices among a village congregation. For when about to pound the rice for making the bread for the Sacrament, the people washed their clothes and bathed, also carefully washing the pestle and mortar. And if there happened to be any bread left after taking the Sacrament, they took it into the Government House, and there prayed before eating it. When asked as to their reasons for doing these things, the people said that they acted in this way because they did not want the unbelievers to know how the bread was made, lest they should despise it, and so the believers thus honoured it. The students were rather puzzled what to say ; however, they cautioned them not to pay superstitious regard to the emblems, and forget whom they typified. " What you do is proper enough if intended as honouring Christ, and not the bread and wine ; but if these only you honour and do not remember Christ, then you are altogether in the wrong."

In early times, missionaries in Madagascar were often welcomed as having come to give the people the Holy Spirit, and others have been addressed, as Paul and Barnabas were, as "God fallen to the earth."

In these, and in many other ways, modern missionary experiences threw light upon both apostolic and early church history, and are well worthy of fuller investigation and study.

Almost ever since the re-establishment of the Mission, we have encouraged the people to practise systematic giving for church expenses by Weekly Offerings. In some churches these are gathered by the use of envelopes, but in most cases by bags, often fixed at the end of a bamboo, so as to reach the people sitting farthest from the gangways. In many country places the collecting-boxes are fixed near the door for the congregation to drop in their offerings as they enter, and the variety of these in different places was often curious: old jam or biscuit tins, sardine boxes and gunpowder flasks were among the articles sometimes used.

Generally speaking, the behaviour of a Malagasy congregation is quiet and orderly; during prayer the heads are bowed down, or the face covered with the *làmba*. Many churches have bought handsome sets of communion plate, and in a few cases individual cups for taking the wine have been introduced. Small biscuits are often used instead of bread, although good bread is now easily obtained wherever there is a small colony of French residents.

In most of the city churches the Sunday School is held immediately after the conclusion of the morning service, although some prefer to have it an hour or more before the afternoon service. Owing to there being few separate buildings for school teaching, the majority of the scholars have to be taught in the churches; but as these are mostly good-sized buildings, the work is carried on without much difficulty. In several city churches there will be from 300 to 400 scholars, including infant classes and those for adults.

We have no evening Sunday services, partly because until quite recent years there was no means of lighting large buildings, but also because the Malagasy were not accustomed to go about after dark on the unlighted and rough roads, and during nearly half the year there was a probability of heavy rain coming on. The second Sunday service is therefore usually held from three o'clock to four in the afternoon. Since the French occupation, the afternoon services have become much less attended, from the attractions provided by the Government in the shape of horse-racing, games, fêtes and other amusements, which draw away the people, especially the young folks.

But let us look into other churches besides those of the L.M.S. If we enter the large church which is the headquarters of the Friends' Mission we shall find very little difference in its arrangement or service from what we have seen in those of the London Mission. And it is worthy of note how "Friends' principles" and practices in England have to be modified or ignored in a country like Madagascar. For instance, silent worship would not suit the Malagasy at all, or benefit them, at any rate in their present stage of Christian life. Singing, again, is a very important part of worship to the Malagasy, as we have seen; indeed, as already mentioned, one of the earliest metrical hymns was written by Mr. J. S. Sewell, who commenced the work of his Society in Madagascar. In the matter of a paid ministry also, there is no difference between our own Society and theirs, all the European missionaries, as well as the native evangelists and pastors, receiving fixed salaries; and even in the observance of the Sacraments—ignored by Friends in England—the great majority of the congregations in the Friends' districts in Madagascar tenaciously hold to them. It shows the practical wisdom of our good comrades, with whom we have always been in hearty co-operation in all Christian work, that they have adapted themselves to the circumstances of the people in allowing so largely what was instituted by the first missionaries to the country.

If we now go up the rather steep road leading to the summit of the city hill we come to the Norwegian Lutheran Church, a spacious building of sun-dried brick, with conspicuous tower and spire. The interior arrangement of this church, which has transepts and chancel, follows very much what would be seen in Norway. The pulpit, with a flight of steps, is at the angle formed by the transept; and the Communion table, fixed altar-wise against the chancel wall, is surmounted with a large wooden cross inscribed with suitable texts, and is draped in scarlet with embroidered white cloth. A low-semicircular railing encloses a large space, with steps for kneeling at the reception of the communion.

The simple and beautiful liturgical service of the Lutheran Church is said by the minister facing the altar, the Gospel and Epistle for the day being in some churches intoned, as well as some of the prayers. The minister is vested in black gown, with a short surplice over it at certain parts of the service, and he wears also the quaint plaited ruff which was worn by our own ancestors, and is seen in old paintings, and in engravings like that of "The Declaration of Independency in the Westminster Assembly." The congregation sits to sing, but stands at the reading of the Gospel and the Epistle. And this is also noticeable at a Lutheran service, viz. that it is begun and concluded by a *layman* reading a prayer at the steps of the chancel.

Going still higher up the road, we come at length to a large triangular space known as Andohàlo, although renamed by the French as "Place Jean Laborde." To the left is a large church of burnt brick and stone, the mother church of the French Protestant Mission. Here, again, as with all the congregations now under its care, the churches on this site were for many years connected with the L.M.S. Mission, so there is hardly any difference between the services here and those still directed by our own Society. On Sunday afternoons a French service is held, which is much more largely attended by young Malagasy of both sexes than by French residents in the Capital, and probably, it must be confessed, more from a desire of becoming familiar with the language of their rulers than from higher motives. The officiating minister is robed in black gown, with bands, as is customary in Protestant churches in France. An organ, formerly in the Chapel Royal in the Palace Yard, was given by the French Governor-General to the Paris Mission soon after the deposition of the last Malagasy Queen. There are galleries round this church, and at the angle of the apse is a carved wood pulpit on a stone base, with lectern, Communion table, and stalls, all well executed by native workmen.

At the north-western corner of this same open space of Andohàlo, now forming a small park with a dense mass of foliage, stands the Anglican Cathedral, on a platform many feet above the general level. It is entirely of stone, within as well as without, and has octagon towers forming shallow transepts, as well as a third octagon tower on one side of the west front. Unfortunately, none of these towers are yet completed by their proper finish of spires, so that the building does not show as prominently as it should from its good position and size.

The interior is dignified, with its pointed arches, but somewhat heavy columns supporting them. A deep chancel, separated from the nave by a good wrought-iron open screen, is raised some height above the body of the church; and we notice on the end wall of the apse a large painting of the Ascension. This, with another large painting, the banners, the cross and the tapers on the altar, etc., tell us that the worship here is distinctly of the High Church type. The services are choral, led by a surpliced choir and a good organ; and on special occasions, when united services are held, in which the country congregations join, and a number of native clergy and other choirs are massed in the chancel, or walk in procession round the church, with the bishop in mitre and cope, with pastoral staff borne before him, the effect is very dramatic and imposing. Still, one may hear, both from native preachers and from English clergy, earnest and instructive sermons, in which evangelical doctrine is unmistakably enforced.

I have never attended a Sunday service in the Roman Catholic Cathedral, which we have passed on the right hand, just before coming to the French Protestant church in Andohàlo. It is a handsome stone structure, with towers crowned by octagon lanterns, and a large wheel window in its chief front. But having been invited to a funeral service there for a German naturalist, who was killed in the north-west of the island, I noticed that the church has a number of good stained-glass windows, together with the altars and pictures and other decorations usual in Romish churches. So there is no doubt that here the skill of that Church in producing spectacular effects and considerable pomp and ceremony in its worship would be seen by any one attending the Sunday morning service.

In passing by the Roman Catholic Cathedral, it will be seen that on the apex of main gable of the chief front, between the towers, there is a statue of the Virgin Mary. This is painted white, but when first fixed in its place it was of copper, or of some other dark-coloured metal. But this greatly scandalized the Malagasy, who were adherents of of the Romish Mission, for they said, "We thought that the Blessed Virgin was a white person, like the Europeans who live here among us; but here her image shows her as dark or darker than we Malagasy are ourselves!" And they were so displeased to see the statue in that state that the priests had to have it painted white in order to quiet their people's minds, and to assure them that the Mother of our Lord was really as light in colour as any European woman.

From the particulars here given it will be seen that there is a considerable variety of religious worship at the choice of a stranger spending a Sunday in Antanànarìvo.

I proceed to describe three Sundays in Madagascar which were rather different from the usual day of rest.

(1) *A Sunday helping to fill up Breaches in the River Embankment.*—From what has been said in some preceding chapters, it will be understood in what way an English missionary employs his time on Sundays; and so I can recall many hundreds of peaceful and happy Sundays in Madagascar, not exactly "days of rest," but of congenial work for the benefit of the people. These were the normal employments of the day; but there have also been, in my experience, a few Sundays of a very unusual character, as will be seen by what follows.

First, with regard to one of them, it may be well to preface its description by remarking that we have in Madagascar a rainy season, from about the beginning of November to the early part of April, when the tropical rain descends in torrents, together with terrific storms of thunder and lightning. Occasionally the rain continues to fall heavily for several days, chiefly in the afternoon and evening, so that the river Ikòpa, with its tributary streams, passing round the Capital to the south and west, overflows its banks and floods the great rice-plain with three or four feet of water. This plain, with its arms and branching valleys, extends for many miles to the south, west, and north-west of Antanànarìvo; and as the rice produced in the central provinces is all grown in water, the whole of this great area is practically at the same level, so that the water from a breach in the embankments spreads all over it very rapidly.

During my long residence in Madagascar I have seen the great rice-plain flooded several times; and as the heavy rains occur just about the time when the rice is ready to be cut, an immense quantity of the crop is destroyed. A few years ago it happened that the banks gave way on the Saturday, and so on Sunday morning the beating of drums and blowing of conch-shells summoned the men to go and stop the breach in the embankment. Except a few old men and young boys, the morning congregations, therefore, were almost entirely composed of women. Under the circumstances, we missionaries decided that it would be right to omit Sunday School and the afternoon services altogether, so that the women might help, while we also went to take some part in the work. We felt that this was a work of necessity and mercy, since the rice is the staff of life to the people.

After a hasty lunch several of us went along the embankment to the point where a great gap had been made by the rushing river, the surface of which was within a couple of feet of the top of the banks and nine or ten feet above the fields, so that the water was tearing through the opening like a mill-race. Here there were thousands of people collected together, but the majority doing nothing to help. Numbers of them, however, had got branches of trees and stones, and others were digging sods to stop the rush of water. We immediately set to work, stripped off our coats, and for three hours or more until dusk were carrying sods and stones to encourage the people to do their utmost and take their part, and I am sure that our example helped and cheered them. It was three or four days before the breach was filled up.

On another occasion of the same kind the Prime Minister and all the chief officers were on the spot every day for a week or more, having a tent pitched on the embankment, and stopping there all day. We went to the place in canoes over the flooded plain for two or three miles, taking with us a number of baskets to carry earth, as well as a quantity of rope, and also money to help in buying food for the workers.

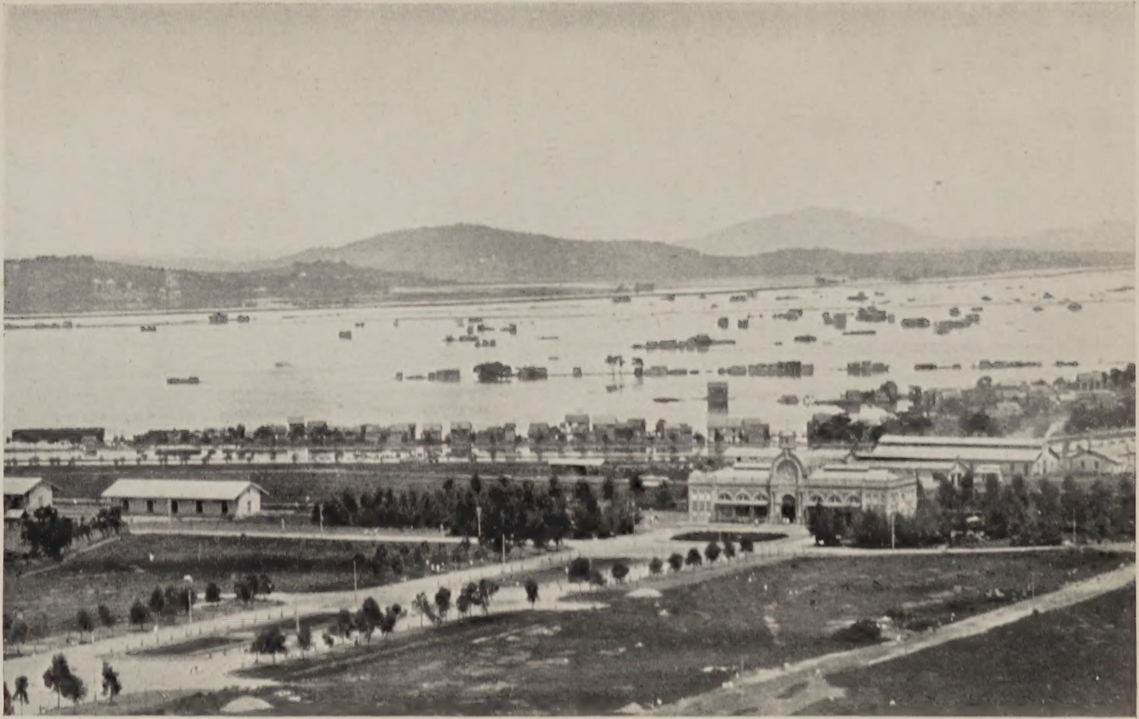
If one could have forgotten that thousands of tons of rice were rotting under the water, the scene from the upper parts of the Capital was an exceedingly pleasing and beautiful one. An immense blue lake stretched away for miles in several directions, branching from the chief expanse into the numerous arms and bays running into the higher ground; and from the water rose numbers of villages on low hills of red clay, forming islands amidst the flood. The contrast of colours, blue water, red earth and green trees and grass, with the bright sky over all, made a charming picture.

And then one remembered that for several weeks, until the water gradually drained off the land, the scene before us really reproduced what must have been its aspect every rainy season, before man came on the stage and embanked the rivers. For this great rice-plain is certainly the bed of an ancient lake, formerly covered with reeds and rushes, the haunt of the crocodile and hippopotamus, and great tortoises, ape-like lemurs, and gigantic birds, all now extinct, the bones only remaining to tell of their existence in former times.

Although the French engineers did very much to raise and strengthen the river banks, they have been broken again since the conquest; and the scene I had witnessed several times under the old native Government was repeated nine or ten years ago under the new régime.

(2) *A Sunday Under Arrest.*—This was a very different Sunday from the one just described, and it happened in this way. Some years ago I made an exploratory journey of nearly three months, together with Mr. Louis Street, of the Friends' Mission, in the south-eastern districts of the island, with the object of ascertaining what had been already done in evangelizing that part of Madagascar, and also what should still be done to extend missionary effort among the people there.

We travelled first to the Bétsiléo province, and had the pleasure of taking part in the meetings of their Yearly Church Union in the chief town, Fìanàrantsòa. From that place we struck to the south-east coast, over country hardly ever traversed before by Europeans, and mapping a good deal of our route, as I carried a good theodolite with me. At every place we visited, especially at the military posts where Hova officers were stationed, we were received



Railway Station

FLOODED RICE-PLAIN, TO WEST AND NORTH-WEST OF CAPITAL

with the greatest kindness and courtesy, and every facility was given to us to preach and speak, and to examine schools, etc. At two or three places we found old friends we had known in Imèrina; and most of the congregations we saw appeared to be progressing very satisfactorily.

Our intention was to follow the coast line if possible to the extreme south-east corner of the island to Fort Dauphin; and we had reached a small port and customs post at about 140 miles distant from Fort Dauphin, and near a large river. From this place, which we reached on a Friday afternoon, we proposed to go about ten miles inland to another Hova military post called Vangaindràno, and spend the Sunday there with the congregation. So on Saturday morning we set off for that place, and after travelling four or five miles we saw a small party of soldiers and officers coming to meet us. But instead of shaking hands, as usual, the chief officer requested us to deliver our passports, that they might be taken to the Governor at Vangaindràno for his opinion about them. We replied that we had no passports and needed none, since the treaties with foreign Governments gave freedom for their citizens to go anywhere in Madagascar where there was a Hova Governor, and that we had been asked for nothing of the kind at any of the Hova posts we had already visited. (I had been expressly told by the British Consul that we should do wrong in asking special permission for journeys, the right of travelling being fully provided for by the treaty.)

The officer then said that as we had no passports we were to return to the customs post on the coast; but we told him we should not do so, but would proceed on our way, which we immediately did, much to his surprise. About three o'clock we arrived opposite Vangaindràno, which is on the southern bank of the Mànanàra, a large place with a tall three-storied Government House. There were a large number of villages in all directions, and apparently a somewhat dense population. Coming to the ferry, we found all the canoes removed to the other side; so we went further up the river bank, and coming to a small cluster of villages, we pitched our tent in one of them and stayed there for the night.

On Sunday morning we concluded that we should have to retrace our steps. But after a while we saw a large canoe in a hollow of the bank which had evidently been overlooked ; so we took possession of it, and immediately began to send our men and baggage across. We decided not to visit Vangaindràno then, but leave it for our return journey homewards, and went on to a village a mile or two farther on, so as to have service there in the afternoon.

But before our baggage had been unpacked we saw that a number of soldiers were coming at a rapid pace towards the village, and in a few minutes about fifty armed men, together with six officers, came up and surrounded the open space in the centre of the village. Presently the chief officer told us that as we had brought no passports we were going about with no object, and had therefore broken the laws, and that we were ordered to go to Vangaindràno. We replied that the discourtesy shown us was the reason we did not go up to the fort, that we had broken no laws, nor were we going about for nothing, but simply to benefit the people, and that this had been acknowledged by the Hova officials at every other place we had visited ; so we only wished to proceed peaceably on our way.

They then replied that their orders were to take every one of our men to Vangaindràno, and that they would bind those who refused to go. At the same time they called out to the wondering crowd of natives who surrounded the place that they were strictly forbidden to assist us in any way. The Taisàka chief of the village, who had promised that his son should be our guide to Fort Dauphin, was also threatened if he gave us any help. After a while our men were collected together and were marched off, strictly guarded.

During the afternoon we were able to have a pleasant talk with the people of the village and others near it about the gospel news, and found them most friendly and willing to listen. We tried to impress upon their memory two or three of the great leading passages of Scripture about the Lord Jesus Christ.

We remained practically prisoners in the village, and our bearers also at the fort, all day Sunday and Monday. On the Tuesday morning they were released under the strictest orders to take us nowhere but homewards. Whether the Hova Governor at Vangaindràno was really obeying orders from the central Government, or whether he, "dressed in a little brief authority," was trying to lord it over Europeans, we never ascertained. But it was clear that further travelling southward was impracticable, and, much to our disappointment, we were unable to visit the congregations already gathered together in several places on the south-east coast. Vangaindràno was the only dark spot in the whole of the eleven weeks' journey, and curiously enough, we had no greater honour and kindness shown to us at any place than at Ankàrana, the Hova fort we reached on the Thursday. The Governor there was extremely hospitable, and did everything possible to show us respect and friendliness.

(3) *A Sunday with a Heathen Congregation.*—This day was again a great contrast to the Sunday just described, and occurred during the same journey in the southern provinces. It was spent at a village called Ivòhitròsa, which is situated in the midst of the lower belt of forest, amidst very fine scenery. Several deep gorges here come down from the upper plateau to the lower coast levels in the midst of dense woods, and down each of them a stream descended in a series of rapids and falls, one especially showing a waterfall of at least 500 to 600 feet in one plunge. The village was placed on the summit of a conical hill, rising about 700 feet above the valley surrounding it; but it looked low compared with the forest-covered mountains not far away, which were from 2,000 to 3,000 feet in height.

We stayed four days at this place, gaining much information about these forest-dwelling people, their customs and superstitions and their language. But the Sunday's experiences were the most interesting, and must be briefly sketched. It rained heavily during the Saturday night and far on into the morning, so that we could not get any assembly for worship until after eleven o'clock. However, by way of doing something before that, I got together the lads and young men in our tent and taught them the alphabet and one-syllable words, and also tried to teach them a hymn and tune. After eleven it cleared a little, and we got the people together for divine service. Many of them had come from the little villages in the surrounding forest on the Saturday afternoon ; and as we came up into Ivòhitròsa from exploring the valleys and their waterfalls, and saw the new arrivals, we might, had we possessed artistic power, have made a striking picture of the scene. Some forty or fifty women, with their brown skins, black hair, scanty clothing, and profuse adornment of beads, silver armlets and brass rings, made a group the like of which we had never set eyes on before, either in Madagascar or anywhere else.

As no house in the village would have held a tenth part of the people, we collected them on a long and pretty nearly level piece of rock, which forms one side of the little square around which the houses are built. This was about forty feet long by twenty broad, and the greater portion of the people sat on planks laid across the rock. When they were all assembled there must have been nearly three hundred present, including our own men, who grouped themselves near us. It was certainly the strangest audience we had ever addressed ; the men did not differ so much in appearance from those to be seen in remote villages in Imèrina, but the women looked very heathenish. Some few had put some slight covering over the upper part of their bodies, but many were just as they ordinarily appeared, some with hair and necks dripping with castor-oil, and with conspicuous ornaments on neck, head, and arms. These were strings of beads, silver dollars, and shells (*félana*), which showed strongly contrasted with the brown skins.

One could not but feel deeply moved to see these poor ignorant folks, the great majority of them joining for the first time in Christian worship, and remembering that although the gospel has been made known in other parts of the world for many centuries, these people were then hearing for the first time the news of salvation and the name of the Saviour. And remembering also our own ignorance of much of their dialect, the utter strangeness of the message we brought, and the darkness of their minds, we felt strongly how helpless we were, and how little we could do in two brief addresses to awaken their apprehension of things spiritual and eternal.

We had some of our most hearty and lively hymns, our men assisting us well with the singing, and then Mr. Street addressed them, reading also part of the Sermon on the

Mount. After this I spoke, trying in as simple a manner as I could to tell what we had come for, and what that *filazantsàra,* that "glad tidings," was which we preached, especially dwelling on the words, "For God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son," etc. The people behaved with perfect decorum, and I noticed on the part of many an earnest, fixed attention, as if they were striving to comprehend what we were saying. I believe this really was the case, for several of the women came to talk with us afterwards, and we found that they did understand a good deal of what was said.

We had hoped to have had another service in the afternoon, but the rain came down heavily and we could not manage it. But a sound of native singing and clapping of hands in our tent told us that some of the people were enjoying themselves in their own way, and, peeping in, I found many of the younger women and girls singing, and one in the middle dancing with a peculiarly graceful motion of the arms and hands. After a little while I asked them to stop, and then had an hour or more's teaching and singing. On the previous afternoon I began to teach them a hymn, of which the refrain is, "Sweet, O Jesus, is Thy love." It was altogether very strange to them, but many did their best to pick it up. It was the first hymn of praise to the Lord Jesus that had ever risen from the lips of the inhabitants of this heathen district! But this Sunday evening was much quieter than was the Saturday evening, and the chief sounds were from our own bearers, who were singing some of the latest favourite tunes learnt at the Capital.

It is sometimes said by opponents of missions that the religion of heathen peoples is good enough for them; let them practise it without our interference. But such talk only shows the ignorance of those who utter it as to what heathenism really is, and the cruelties it sanctions and commands. And we found that among these forest people, together with much that was pleasing in them in many respects, their superstition led them to consider that eight days in every lunar month were unlucky, and children born on those days were killed by being held with their faces immersed in water in the *sahàfa* or winnowing-fan. So that on an average, *more than a quarter of the children born* were destroyed! Is it not still as true now as it was in the days of the Psalmist, that " the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty " ?

But in concluding this chapter I am glad to be able to give a brighter aspect to this last paragraph, and to say that our visit to this forest region was the beginning of better things for the inhabitants of these dense woods, and that it resulted in an evangelist being stationed there, whose teaching led to congregations being gathered together and to schools being formed, so that the light of the gospel is slowly penetrating the darkness of heathenism. By the labours of earnest missionaries and preachers of the Norwegian Lutheran Society, the southern regions of the island, including the Tanàla or forest tribes, are being evangelized ; the superstitions and cruelties of the old times are passing, away ; and we may hope that before many years are passed, the blessings of the gospel will be fully realized by all the southern peoples of Madagascar.

CHAPTER XIV

WOMAN IN MADAGASCAR: HER POSITION AND INFLUENCE, ESPECIALLY IN CHRISTIAN EFFORT

It is well known that in most heathen countries, women occupy a degraded position, and in some places the hardest work of daily life falls to their lot; while even in countries of a high civilization like China and India, the birth of a girl is looked upon as a misfortune; in the former, girl-infanticide is common, and in the latter, the condition of child-widowhood is lamentable, from the misery it involves on the innocent victims of ancient customs and beliefs.

Now the position of women in Madagascar differs considerably from that of those living in the countries just mentioned, and they occupy a much higher place in the social scale than we find is the case in most heathen and Mohammedan nations. This is evident from the fact that for sixty-eight years (with a short interruption of not quite two years), Madagascar was governed by *queens*, and this necessarily gave women a dignity and importance impossible and unknown to many non-Christian countries. Queen Rànavàlona I, the persecuting sovereign; Queen Rasohèrina, the one who granted religious toleration; Queen Rànavàlona II, the first Christian sovereign; and the late ex-Queen, Rànavàlona III, were all of them women of considerable firmness and energy of character, and maintained their own positions with dignity.

And not only have there been Malagasy queens, but some of the subject-tribes have also had chieftainesses of great intelligence and influence. One of these was Ihòvana, formerly head of the Northern Tanàla or forest-people, a fine and stout old lady, who used to come up to the Capital on special occasions to attend great national assemblies. At these she would take spear and shield, and in a rousing speech assure the Queen of her own and her people's loyalty and devotion. She would say: "I'm not a woman, but a man! and all that a man can do to defend the country, that will *I* do!" Yet she was also a humble Christian, and did all in her power to extend the gospel among her own forest people.

Malagasy women have much influence in social and family life; and in all business connected with the family or clan, they give their opinion and advice and are listened to with respect. The chief, almost the only, point in which Malagasy women had to complain of inequality with men, was the power of divorce which native custom gave to the husband. In former times it was possible for the wife to be divorced in such a way as to prevent her marrying again; but this practice was a very unusual one, and was very seldom resorted to. It is possible, however, that customs of this kind, long obsolete among the Hova, are yet found in some of the still heathen tribes of Madagascar.

Among almost all the Malagasy peoples there appears to be none of that prejudice against widows which is so painful a feature in Hindu society. There is, however, one tribe, the Sihànaka, amongst whom there did exist a custom very much resembling those common in India; and it is difficult to say why they practised it, and also, why they only among the Malagasy peoples followed such a custom. It was as follows: On the return of the family from the funeral ceremonies for a man, the unfortunate widow, who had previously been placed in front of the house, decked in all her best clothing and ornaments, was assailed with all kinds of abuse by the relatives of her deceased husband. She was accused by them of having caused his death by her more fortunate and powerful *vintana*, or fate. They would rush upon her, stripping her violently of almost all her clothing, tearing off her silver ornaments and the ear-rings from her ears; and she was then obliged to live for several months in a rough shed, with an allowance of food barely sufficient to sustain life; she was given a broken vessel and a worn-out spoon with which to eat her rice; she was not allowed to wash or bathe, or to leave her retreat except at night; and after a year, she had still to be divorced, with all the usual customs, by the husband's relatives, just as if he had been still alive. Happily, however, this cruel custom, like many other evil things, has been put down by the influence of the Gospel.

We may now describe some of the more pleasing features in the life of Malagasy women, especially those of the central provinces.

They do not, like most African women, do the digging of the ground, or the hardest outdoor work, or the building of the native houses or huts. Still, there is a certain portion of outdoor labour which is considered as the women's share, and which they perform as their regular duty. Most Malagasy tribes, except the western Sàkalàva, live chiefly upon rice, which is to them the staff of life. As among the Hebrews and Arabs and other Orientals, "to eat bread" is equivalent to "taking a meal" with us, so is the Malagasy phrase, "to eat rice"; and the preparation of the rice-fields and the culture of rice absorbs a large proportion of their time and attention. Malagasy rice is—almost all of it—transplanted. After being sown thickly in the smaller rice-plots or nurseries, it is taken up, plant by plant, when it is about six or eight inches high and transplanted into the larger rice-fields in the broader valleys and plains. This transplanting is woman's work and is done by the female servants, formerly slaves, and by the poorer portion of the people.

The rice-field has been previously dug over and levelled by the spades of the men, and flooded with water from the channels which supply every rice-field; and so, standing more than ankle-deep in the soft mud and water, with their coarsest clothing tucked around them, the girls and women, each with a bundle of the young rice plants in the left hand, deftly and most rapidly stick each plant with the other hand into the soft mud. And it is astonishing to see how large a rice-field will be covered over in a day with this transplanted rice by a small company of women. Their mistress often sits on the raised embankment near at hand, taking charge of the bundles of young plants, handing them to her servants and helpers as they are needed, encouraging them by a few approving words, or an aptly quoted proverb; for it must be very fatiguing and backaching work, stooping down hour after hour in the hot sunshine; yet it always seems to be patiently done as one of their lives' yearly duties. A basket of cooked rice or manioc-root is usually near by to afford some refreshment during the day's work or at its close.

As the rice grows and ripens, it is again a part of the women's duties, as well as the children's, to weed the fields and clear away the numerous useless plants which grow up among the ripening grain.

After the rice has been cut by the men and taken, usually by small canoes, along the narrow water-channels at the side of the fields, to the threshing-floor, women again join in the work of separating the grain, by the simple and primitive fashion of beating a bundle of rice-stalks on an upright stone fixed in the ground. The rice is then taken to the neighbouring village or homestead and is stored in pits dug out of the hard, red clay soil, or sometimes in a huge basket made from a rush mat and kept in the house. In preparing it for household use there comes in another part of the Malagasy women's work, chiefly, but not exclusively, done by them, that of pounding the rice required for the family every day. Placed in a deep wooden mortar, the rice is pounded with a long wooden pestle to clear it of the husk, and often, if fine white rice is desired, of the inner red skin also. This is a fatiguing task, but is often lightened by three or even four taking part in the work, the various pestles descending in rapid and alternate strokes. The cooking of the rice and other food taken with it is, of course, a part of women's work, the mistress of the house serving it out to the members of the family as they sit around on the flooring mats.

The fetching of water for household consumption is also a part of the regular daily duty of Malagasy women. And as the old villages and towns were always in former times built for security on the tops of hills—often very high ones—it must have been a yet more laborious task than it is at the present day, when the villages are built on the plains, or at lower elevations. Morning and evening, at innumerable places, the women and girls may be seen descending the hill, with their water-pots on their heads, to fetch the water from the spring at the base of the hill, or at the edge of the rice-plains, and then labouring up the steep hill with their water-vessels.

It need hardly be said that the nursing of the children and the care of the house are important parts of Malagasy women's work. Infants and young children are carried about a good deal by their mothers and nurses on the back, tightly wrapped round in the folds of the *làmba*, or outer loose dress. With their babies thus fixed up, the women go about their household duties, cooking, spinning, or weaving, etc., with apparently little inconvenience.

Spinning and weaving are, as just mentioned, parts of women's work in Madagascar, and very ingenious and skilful they are in these handicrafts. Almost every woman among the Hova, from the Queen down to the slaves, in former times, could spin and weave; and they could produce—and still do so, though to a less extent—with very simple spindles and very primitive looms, beautiful and strong *làmbas* or cloths, of rofia-palm fibre, of hemp, of cotton, and of silk, with elaborate patterns, generally showing much taste and variety of design. Among many Malagasy tribes, a common name for a girl is *zàza-ampèla*, that is, "spindle-child," since spinning is one of their chief occupations.

In this chapter there is no intention to give a complete description of Malagasy women's life, or occupations, or position, so it may be sufficient here to say that in addition to the foregoing particulars about their most ordinary duties, the plaiting of mats of various kinds from rush and grass; the making of baskets of all shapes and sizes, from the same materials; the manufacture of men's hats; the finer kinds closely resembling those called "panamà" in Europe; the dredging for fish in the rice-fields after the rice has been cut; and the making of pottery—are also all occupations in which native women are skilful, as well as acting as traders on the wayside, or in the great markets. In later years, they also do a good deal of harder work in carrying burdens and in pulling hand-carts, rather too severe work for women to engage in. Of lighter and more suitable occupations more recently introduced we shall speak more fully in a subsequent chapter of this book.

In the female life of Madagascar, so pleasing in many of its aspects, as thus briefly sketched in the preceding pages, the Gospel has come with its elevating and purifying influences. All that is best in Malagasy women's nature has responded to its call. The Saviour, whose attraction was felt by Martha and the Marys, by Joanna and Salome and many other holy women of Palestine, has also drawn to Himself and His service many a Rasòa and Rafàra and Ravèlo and Ramànga,[1] of Madagascar, and unnumbered thousands of Malagasy women who have become His disciples. The deeply religious character of several of the native women who were pupils of the first missionaries' wives has already been noticed (see p. 220, Chapter X), and many among them were the first to believe in the gospel. There is no doubt that in Madagascar the women are more religious than the men, for in every congregation they form the large majority of those present; in my own church of Anàlakèly, for instance, they were three times as many as the men.

It should be remembered that the first martyr for Christ's sake was the brave and gentle lady, Rasalàma, who was speared at Ambòhipòtsy on August 14, 1837, after having endured much torture previously by being fettered so as to bring all the four limbs close together. Among those fourteen who were hurled over the rocks of Ampàmarìnana on March 28, 1849, six were women; and of the four who suffered the terrible death of being burned alive at Fàravòhitra on the same day, one, Ramànandalàna, was a woman. And in the less but still severe punishments for holding to "the praying," in being sold into slavery, in being exposed to the derision of cruel mobs in the public markets, in having to drink the poison ordeal, and in many other ways, Malagasy Christian women were as ready as the men to count all things but loss for Christ's sake, and to suffer hardness and bonds and imprisonment rather than deny their Lord.

But to come to later and happier times; as may be supposed from what has been already said as to the great preponderance of the female element in our congregations, Malagasy women are much to the fore in all religious work. It was a queen, Rasohèrina, who gave religious toleration to her subjects. It was a queen, Rànavàlona II, who was the first professedly Christian sovereign, and used all her influence to promote Christianity among her people. The last chief ruler, Rànavàlona III, was a pupil in our L.M.S. Girls' High School, and my wife also taught her occasionally when, as a young girl, she came in her aunt's court to Ambòhimànga every year; so she naturally grew up under Christian influences, and, like her predecessor, used her high position to help every good work.

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[1] These are very common names for Malagasy girls and women.

In Sunday School teaching, in the Societies of Christian Endeavour, in Dorcas gatherings, and in the promotion of temperance, Malagasy women are our mainstay, and our most efficient and earnest workers. And although it was quite contrary to former native ideas for women to speak in public, the women's great meetings during every Six-Months' assembly at the Capital have encouraged many of them to address their companions on these occasions; and this I understand most of them do with propriety and acceptance. I once had the opportunity of hearing one of our Anàlakèly ladies—she was the wife of a native governor—give a Sunday School address, and it was one of the best I ever listened to. The Christian Endeavour Societies also help the young women who are members to take their part in giving addresses and in offering prayer at the weekly meetings. In the mission districts north of the Capital there has been for some years past an association of Christian women whose members itinerate among the village churches at regular intervals and hold services especially for women. Others again, in small parties, will make an evangelistic journey among the less enlightened districts of the country and endeavour to arouse the ignorant people to their need of salvation.

Some years ago two Christian women went away as missionaries to a distant part of Madagascar, and the work of the wives of the native evangelists who have been trained in our College has been already mentioned in Chapter IX. The good work done formerly by the evangelists who had received a little medical knowledge, was in some cases added to by their wives, who had been instructed in midwifery and the care of new-born infants at the mission hospital at the Capital. They thus did great service to many native women, who often suffer much and frequently die for want of a little elementary knowledge at the time of childbirth.

Another valuable employment for Malagasy women has been found in many of them being trained as nurses for the sick. This work was begun by Dr. Davidson soon after the opening of the first mission hospital in 1865, and continued by his successors in the medical mission, especially by Miss C. Byam, who was afterwards decorated by the French Government for her valuable services to the State. Most of these trained nurses are also Christian women, who therefore bring spiritual as well as bodily help to the patients whom they attend.

It need, perhaps, hardly be mentioned that every missionary family has received great help from Malagasy girls as nurses to the children. Many of these have remained for years attached to one family, coming back to it again and again, as the father and mother have returned from furlough. This was the case with our own faithful Ramànga, who, coming into our service in 1870, nursed all our children in their infancy, carrying them on her back in native fashion, and continued as our affectionate helper and friend until we had to part from her when finally leaving Madagascar in 1915.

Besides the varied Christian service engaged in by Malagasy women already mentioned, it must be noticed that for many years past numbers of them have served the churches as deaconesses. Native ideas of propriety make it unwise for *men* to visit women, to teach them or interview them ; and thus the deaconess does valuable and necessary work in instructing the women candidates for baptism and church fellowship, teaching them the catechism, inquiring into their lives and conduct, and reporting to the church their suitability or otherwise to be accepted as members. In cases where discipline has to be exercised, the help of the deaconess also becomes very needful.

In one of the mission districts of the Bétsiléo province, a further step has been taken in giving women a still larger share in church work. In the district of Ambòhimandròso, presided over for forty years by my friend the late Rev. T. Rowlands, there is a small sub-district near the mission station, containing seven village congregations. This was under Mrs. Rowlands's special care and superintendence ; and as it had been found impossible to obtain suitable *men* for pastors, seven good women were appointed to act as the leaders and teachers of those churches. These seven women, with Mrs. Rowlands's help and guidance, did almost all the pastoral work, preaching, teaching and visiting; Mr. Rowlands, however, conducting the Communion services once a quarter. During a few days' visit to the Bétsiléo province, we had the opportunity of meeting these seven "pastoresses," and were much pleased with their apparent intelligence and ability. We were told that the experiment had succeeded well, and doubtless this new departure in church work will be followed in other places. In one of the Imèrina districts there is also a woman pastor. Since our visit to Bétsiléo, the little district just described has been deprived of its beloved superintendent by the rather sudden death of Mrs. Rowlands, just as she had returned to Madagascar to resume the work she did so faithfully and lovingly.

From what has been said in this chapter it will be seen that Malagasy women are gradually taking a larger part in religious and philanthropic work. They laboured hard during the Great War to send clothing and comforts of various kinds to the Malagasy troops engaged in the service of France in Europe. And as their intelligence increases, they will take a still wider share in the work of extending the Kingdom of Christ in their native country.

CHAPTER XV

THE FRENCH CONQUEST OF MADAGASCAR, AND ITS EFFECTS UPON MISSIONS AND CHRISTIANITY IN THE ISLAND: PART I

For more than two hundred and fifty years the French cast longing eyes on the great African island. It was first seen by Europeans in the last year of the fifteenth century (August 10, 1500), when the Portuguese navigator Diogo Diaz discovered parts of the east coast. During the century and a half following that date, several unsuccessful attempts were made by the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English and the French to plant colonies, or at least settlements, in Madagascar, and on the strength of having placed a few trading posts on the eastern coast, the French laid claim to the whole great island, so that a book published in 1859 was entitled, *Madagascar: Possession française depuis* 1642 (!). These posts, however, had been abandoned, although subsequently the French took the small islands of Nòsibé on the north-west coast, and Ste Marie on the east coast. The distant islands of Bourbon and Mauritius also came into their possession in 1649 and 1721 respectively, and the French trading-posts in Madagascar were regarded as dependencies of the two Mascarene islands.

Before the close of the great war with Napoleon Buonaparte, Bourbon and Mauritius were captured by the British, and with them, any supposed French rights in Madagascar also fell into our hands; but these claims were relinquished by the Mauritius Government and given to the Malagasy sovereign, Radàma I, as part of a treaty of friendship made by him with England. No further claim was then made by the French to any part of Madagascar, and during the reign of the Emperor Napoleon III there was an understanding between the English and French Governments that neither should take any political action with regard to the island without the consent of the other.

During the reign of Queen Rasohèrina (1863–1868) treaties of friendship and commerce were made between the Malagasy and the English, the American and the French Governments; in all these the Hova Queen was acknowledged as "Sovereign of Madagascar," and in the French treaty there was not a word respecting any claim or rights of their own over the island.

Towards the close of the reign of Queen Rasohèrina's successor, Rànavàlona II, difficulties arose between the French representative in Antanànarìvo and the native Government. Ambassadors of high rank were sent to France to try and arrange the matters in dispute, but without success, as the French Government insisted on the cession of a very large extent of territory in the northern part of Madagascar. On the Malagasy envoys declining to accede to these demands, they were dismissed with scant courtesy and came to England, where they were received with much respect and entertained for several weeks at the public expense. A committee of influential people connected with, or interested in, Madagascar was formed to help the Malagasy cause; several pamphlets and statements of the Malagasy case were issued, and much sympathy was expressed with the sovereign and people of Madagascar in what seemed to be a deliberate attempt on the part of a powerful European nation to oppress a weaker one. The British Government, however, did not feel able to interfere in the dispute, except by remonstrance and inquiry.

As the native Government stood firm, war was declared in 1883 by the French naval authorities; Tamatave, the chief port, was taken possession of, and a number of the smaller ports were bombarded at intervals. About the same time also occurred "the Shaw incident," which excited much indignation in England. Against Mr. George Shaw, a missionary of the L.M.S. stationed at Tamatave, an absurd accusation was made of attempting to poison French soldiers; he was imprisoned for several weeks on the French Admiral's ship, treated with great harshness, and the French on shore reported that he would be shot. His case was taken up by our own Government and energetic protest made; for several nights running the attention of Parliament was drawn to it, and there was considerable tension between the two nations. At length Mr. Shaw was released, the French Government paying him a thousand pounds compensation and acknowledging that "an innocent man had been wrongfully accused." But the whole affair left an unpleasant impression as to the animus of the French officials against English missionaries.

I happened to arrive at Tamatave during Mr. Shaw's imprisonment, for with my wife and little daughter and a small party of missionaries, including Mrs. Shaw, we were returning to our work after furlough in England. The harbour at Tamatave was occupied by several French cruisers, and immediately on our dropping anchor marines were placed at our gangways, and all communication with the shore or the English vessels in the port was strictly forbidden. These vessels were two small corvettes, the *Dryad* and the *Dragon*, which had been ordered by the French Admiral to anchor a mile away to the north. Finding it impossible to land us in Madagascar at that place, our captain (of the *Taymouth Castle*) took us to Port Louis in Mauritius. Before leaving Tamatave, however, our captain received orders from Captain Johnstone, the senior English officer, not to go away without taking his mails and despatches. Of course our captain obeyed these orders, although this had been forbidden by the French Admiral, and after two or three days' stay we left the anchorage and steamed past the Admiral's ship on our way towards the *Dryad*. We were not at all certain that we should not presently hear the report of a gun sending a shot across our bows before we passed the *Nièvre*. However, the Admiral apparently did not care to risk a collision with the English vessels, and we proceeded on our way; we took Captain Johnstone's despatches and letters, and steamed out of Tamatave harbour by the northern entrance. After four months' detention in Mauritius, we managed to reach Madagascar by the more southerly port of Màhanòro between two bombardments, and arrived at Antanànarìvo in time to be present at the coronation of the young queen, Rànavàlona III, on November 22.

I may add here that we afterwards heard that in the event of our steamer being fired at, Captain Johnstone was quite prepared to attack the French Admiral. The two English vessels had steam up, guns loaded, cables ready to slip at a moment's notice, etc ; and that he would have rammed the *Niévre*, an old wooden ship, and have steamed out of harbour before any of the half-dozen French cruisers at anchor could have followed him, or have brought a gun to bear upon the *Dryad* or the *Dragon*. Happily, all these preparations were unnecessary, and we proceeded unmolested on our way to Port Louis. There was no *Entente cordiale* at that time between the two nations; and Captain Johnstone's action was evidently approved of by our Government, for he immediately received promotion to the rank of post-captain.

The war—if it could be dignified by such a name—went on in a desultory fashion for about two years and a half, but in December 1885, a treaty was concluded between the Malagasy and the French Governments. A few of the ports had been bombarded again and again, but the French forces never advanced ten miles into the interior, and a small Malagasy army entrenched themselves in such a strong position near Tamatave—a place surrounded with marsh and swamp—that the enemy, after repeated attempts, was quite unable to dislodge them. It was a campaign that certainly brought no credit to the French arms. By the treaty, it was agreed that a French Resident should be stationed at the Capital, with a small guard of honour ; that he should have control of the *foreign* relations of Madagascar, but should not interfere with *internal* affairs ; that foreigners should be allowed to purchase land, and that the valuable harbour of Diègo-Suarez, at the extreme north of the island, with a certain amount of territory around it, should be ceded to the French.

This treaty remained in force—nominally at least—for about seven years, but in some of its provisions it was a dead letter. Two or three French Residents came one after another to the Capital, but their presence made little difference in the government of the country ; the advice and help of the Resident was never sought by the Prime Minister, the real governor of Madagascar ; he seemed to be simply ignored ;

and constant difficulties were thrown in the way of foreigners acquiring land for planting or building. It therefore became evident that such a state of things could not last, and that the French would be obliged to take stronger measures to enforce what had been conceded to them.

And here I may say that, in common with most of my missionary brethren, I had for a long time hoped that the leaders of the Hova Malagasy would so much develop in intelligence and ability, that they would be able to govern the whole island, to preserve their independence as a nation, and to progress in civilization, something in the same way as the Japanese have done. And therefore, during the first French war, several of us did our best to help the Malagasy cause, and to show the justice of their side in the dispute. But we were all gradually obliged to confess that we had formed too sanguine an opinion as to their ability to govern the country. There was too much self-seeking and too little patriotism; nepotism was rampant; the sons and other relatives of the Prime Minister and other great families were allowed to act in a scandalous fashion towards the people; governorships and other offices could only be obtained by bribery or favouritism; there was no attempt to modify the system of domestic slavery; and the injustice of the old native custom of unpaid and unequal forced service (*fanompòana*) seemed often more oppressive than ever. At one time we, as a missionary committee, felt constrained to address a letter of solemn and earnest remonstrance to the Prime Minister, calling his attention to some of the more crying evils and entreating him to do his utmost to put an end to them. But apparently no attempt was made to comply with our urgent remonstrances, or to improve matters. Had the provisions of the treaty been loyally carried out by the Malagasy Government, it is possible that under a French Protectorate the Queen would have been allowed to retain much of her position and dignity, and the country would have been gradually opened to European influences and civilization. But it was not so to be; and there could be but one end to the wanton disregard of the obligations which the Malagasy had agreed to.

At length, in the year 1894, the French made another attempt—now in earnest—to enforce their claims, and an expeditionary force was sent out to Madagascar towards the end of the year. The soldiers were landed at Majunga, on the north-west coast, for although this place is much further from the Capital than Tamatave, the route presented far less difficulty, in the absence of the two belts of forest covering steep ranges of mountain, and it was comparatively level country. But as there were no roads in our sense of the word, the troops had to make practicable roads for the conveyance of the artillery and all necessary equipment, and this of course took time, so that it was several months before the invading force, which left Majunga in February, 1895, reached the interior.

During the first nine months of that year, every part of our mission work was steadily carried on : Sunday services, Bible-classes, College training, etc. In fact, the length of time occupied by the slowly advancing French troops made most people somewhat indifferent as to what was going to happen when they reached Antanànarìvo.

Meanwhile, the native Government made serious efforts to oppose the invaders. For several years before 1895 they had procured the help of two or three English sergeants from Mauritius to drill their soldiers in European fashion ; and later on, three English officers, who had seen active service in the South African wars, but were not, of course, then in the regular army, were engaged to train a large body of Malagasy soldiers. This was done in a very efficient manner ; the senior officer of the three was made General, and a large entrenched camp was formed about seven miles north of the Capital. Some of us were invited to go out there one day to see a review of the troops, and we were astonished to see the perfect order and the precision with which the Malagasy executed all the manœuvres, and the excellent discipline of the large body of men encamped there.

Judging from the high praise the Malagasy troops serving under French officers in the Great War with Germany obtained from their commanders, there is little doubt that had these English officers been given a free hand and been continued in supreme direction of the native army, the French expeditionary force would never have reached the interior. But there was such jealousy of foreigners among the higher Malagasy officers, who were mostly incapable and quite ignorant of high military tactics themselves, that these three English officers were dismissed just at the critical moment when their advice and leadership were most essential. The result was as might have been expected. The native troops were made to retreat constantly before the enemy; strong positions along the route, which might have been easily defended, were abandoned one after another, and at length, on Sunday, September 29th, the invading force, which had really been reduced by fever and disease to a comparatively small number, could be seen encamped at about five miles north of Antanànarìvo.

For some time before this happened, there had been much discussion among us as to what should be done when the French troops really appeared. Two or three of our number felt it best to go down to the coast, with their wives and children, but the majority thought it their duty to stay with their people and share their difficulties and trials, as we had for long shared their prosperity. We knew there might be risks, but we felt that it was a time to run these risks, and to trust in God's protecting care. We did not believe that the French troops would act as savages, and we felt sure that the Malagasy, among whom we had lived for so many years, would not do us any harm. Of course, we were severely censured by newspaper correspondents, who thought they knew far more than we did about the people. We were called fools and fanatics, who ought to have been ordered away by our Consul, etc. But I am sure that our staying with our people was a great help to them; for how could we say to *them,* " Trust in God, look to Him to protect you," etc., if we showed no trust in that protection for *ourselves.* And the result amply justified our action; not a word of insult was spoken to us, and not the slightest harm came to us or our property. I think we can hardly over-estimate the good that resulted from our staying at our posts.

In confirmation of the opinion just expressed, the following statement by one of the most intelligent Malagasy in the Capital may be quoted. He said that " the missionaries had no idea of the immense amount of good they had done in staying here with the people in their trouble. It had kept their faith in Christianity more than anything else they could have done; it had done more to increase their faith than years of teaching."

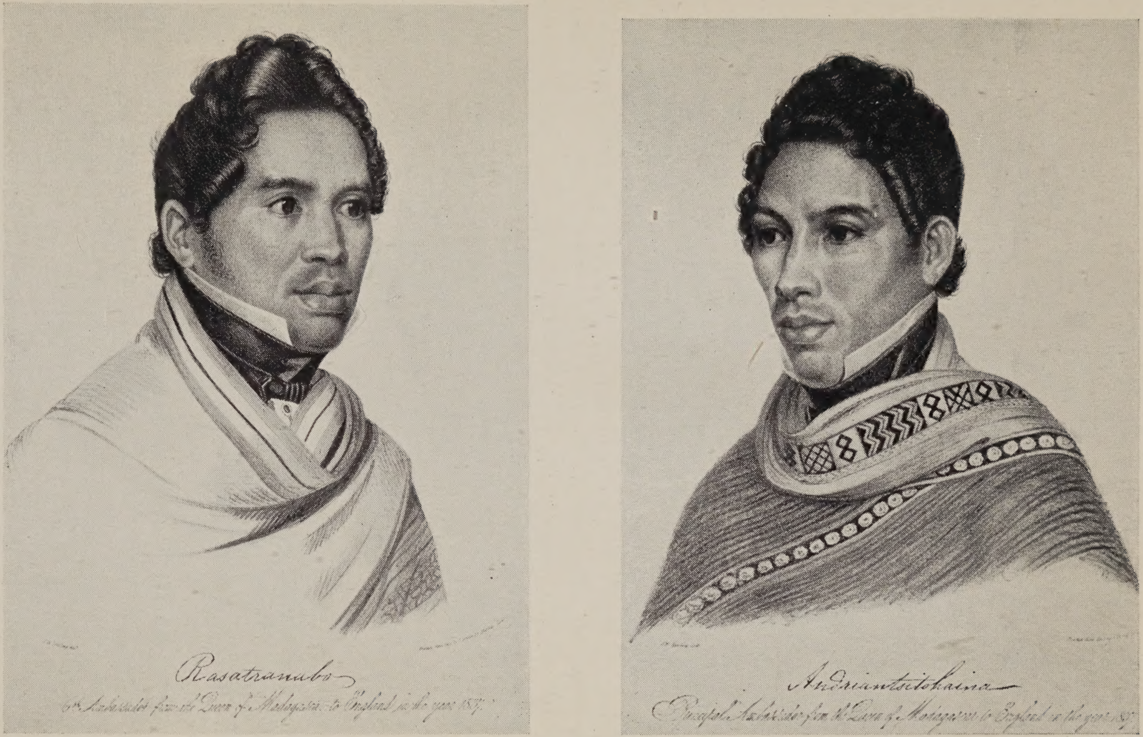
Monday, September 30th, was a day which none of us who were present in the Capital will ever forget. Several of us had moved during the previous two or three days into our mission hospital, a place about a mile and a half to the north of the city, thinking that probably it might be safer there under the Red Cross flag, and about 400 Malagasy had also asked to take refuge there, either in the hospital or in the many surrounding buildings. Early in the forenoon, the French troops advanced to the north and east of the city and began to fire upon it, so that we heard for the first time the peculiar scream of shells as they passed over our heads. The Malagasy replied to this with two or three pieces of cannon on the northern ridge of the city hill, so that for some time we were between two fires. Happily, however, no shell fell upon the hospital buildings, although three or four exploded in the ground surrounding them. The low ground in front of us towards the city was occupied by a number of Malagasy soldiers, who repeatedly ran up the ridge to the east and fired with their rifles at the advancing French, and then came down it to reload. But after some time a party of French soldiers gained the summit of a hill north of the hospital and fired volley after volley over the roof, so as to clear the plain of the Malagasy, who were obliged to retire; and the sharp crack of each volley was mingled with the cannon firing from each side and went on during all the forenoon. We began to feel that it was warm work, but no one appeared much alarmed; the novel and exciting experience seemed to take away fear.

Early in the afternoon, the French got nearer to the east of the city and began firing at the great palace, which is so conspicuous on the summit of the lofty ridge. The Malagasy still replied with their own cannon; and presently we saw a train of mules on the eastern road, bringing melinite shells for a more effective attack on the palace. The shells had already killed some people in the city and damaged one of the palace towers, but at length the Queen, grieved to see her subjects destroyed and feeling that further resistance was useless, ordered the royal flag to be lowered; but it was some time before this could be done. Meanwhile, we stood in the hospital grounds, watching the firing and listening to the scream of the shells. At length, at about four o'clock, we saw a white flag displayed from the north-east tower of the palace and the firing ceased. After some little time a white flag was seen being carried up the side of the hill, followed by two Malagasy officers in palanquins, and a number of people on foot. From a group of French soldiers on the top of the hill, another white flag was seen to advance, and two or three officers went to meet the Malagasy. With our glasses we could see them parleying and then they all moved northwards to meet General Duchesne, who was in the rear. To him the formal surrender was then made, and soon afterwards the French troops marched into Antanànarìvo, and bivouacked in the centre place of Andohàlo, and the war was at an end !

In an hour or two a French officer on horseback galloped up to the gate of the hospital and asked for the doctors. He said that they had a number of men wounded and many more very ill with fever, and he would like to bring them all into the hospital before night. So just after sunset we saw a long train of mules come along, bringing the sick and wounded in a kind of pannier on the animals' backs. The doctors and the matron were soon very busy preparing for their new inmates, and in a little time one of the lower wards was cleared for their reception. Several of us, including myself, helped to bring them in and put them to bed. But one or two of the poor fellows died before we could get them into the hospital. So we were all fully occupied going round the wards with plates of rice and milk and eggs, and other invalid's food.

The whole day's proceedings seemed like a dream, but there could be no doubt that Madagascar had ceased to be an independent state and would now become a French possession. We felt very sad for the people, and especially for the poor Queen, who, in the midst of her own trouble and anxiety, found time to send a kindly message to us all. And we had great reason to be thankful for the safety in which we had all been kept during a day of peril, for although shells fell in the hospital grounds, there was no loss of life, neither were there many Malagasy killed in the city when it was attacked.

Great praise was due to the French troops for their quiet


Rasatranabo
6th Ambassador from the Queen of Madagascar to England in the year 1837
Andriantsitohaina
Principal Ambassador from the Queen of Madagascar to England in the year 1837

TYPES OF HOVA MALAGASY
Two of six Ambassadors to Europe in 1837

and humane behaviour to the Malagasy; there was no looting or violence, or destruction of property. It will hardly be believed that within an hour or two of the surrender of Antanànarìvo, the French soldiers were buying food and other things from the stalls of the petty traders in the market as if nothing special had happened on that eventful day. This orderly behaviour was largely due to the very humane orders issued to his troops by General Duchesne, before the Capital was occupied. To a great extent also it resulted from the weak condition of a large portion of the small invading force, owing to fever and the fatigue and hardships of their long march from the coast. Those of us who had been at the hospital for the preceding three or four days, returned to our homes on the Tuesday morning, finding everything perfectly safe and uninjured.

On the Saturday I accompanied two of our own mission and three members of the Friends' Mission to the Residency to see General Duchesne, who received us very politely and assured us that we might proceed with all our work in perfect confidence. And here it may be said that our College and school work was only interrupted for about a week during the revolution through which we had passed; Sunday services in the Capital for only one Sunday, and everything was soon going on quietly, just as before the arrival of the invading force. Our Six-Monthly Union meetings could not be held at their usual time, but they were held three weeks later and were well attended.

On Sunday morning we went down as usual to our church at Anàlakèly, where there were about only a hundred people present, for thousands of people had fled away into the country when the French troops got near the Capital. To those present I preached from Jer. xxiv. 4 the comforting words, "I know the thoughts that I think towards you; thoughts of peace and not of evil," etc. About sixty people stayed to the Communion, but as the sacramental vessels had been carefully put away for security, we had to do without a table-cloth, or the usual beautiful service, and to make shift with some glasses and plates borrowed from a neighbouring house.

In the afternoon I went out to two of our nearest village churches, but neither place was open, for the people were still in dread as to whether they would be allowed to worship. However, I got a few people together in each village outside the church, to talk with them and assure them that they had no cause at all for fear; and I encouraged them to open the building for worship on the following Sunday. On that Sunday I was at two other of our village churches and preached, for the people seemed to be gradually recovering confidence, and saw that the French authorities were not interfering with their religion, as, indeed, had been made clear to them in the proclamations posted up everywhere.

After about a month's time, as I heard that the country people in the distant portions of my district were still fearful about meeting together for worship, I determined that it would be wise to take a rapid tour round these distant villages, to give the congregations assurance that they might worship as usual without any fear of interference on the part of the French. So I set off for the north on November 9th (Saturday), and was away nine days. I met two small congregations on that day, spoke to four others on the Sunday, and to fifteen others before getting back home. Time and College duties did not allow me to go to the extreme end of the district, but I reached villages two and a half days' journey distant, and I believe everywhere I was able to calm the people's minds and encourage them. I assured them at every place that they had nothing to fear if they obeyed the laws and quietly went on with their usual employments. How little did I anticipate that within three months from that time, places that I passed over in that journey would be the site of two large rebel camps of heathen Malagasy, and that no European or native Christian's life would be safe north of Ambòhimànga for many months afterwards. But I felt not the slightest apprehension of danger. I had travelled about the country for many years with perfect confidence in the kindly feeling of all Malagasy towards us, and I saw no reason to distrust them then.

Yet, under the outward calm and peaceableness which appeared everywhere around us, there were hidden elements of disturbance and lawlessness which no one had realized. We knew, of course, that a great deal of the apparent acquiescence in Christianity on the part of numbers of the Malagasy was simply *outward* profession and was only due to a wish to please the Queen and the native Government, or to fear that they would be thought disloyal if they did not conform to the worship patronized by royalty. But now that the Queen had lost her kingdom there was no need for pretending to like the foreigners' religion any longer, for old heathen ideas and habits were still strong in the minds of numbers of the people ; and now, they thought, we can have our old customs back again. With this, too, there was hatred of the rule of foreigners, and anger that the invaders had not been repulsed. So there arose a formidable movement, half-patriotic and anti-foreign and half anti-Christian, which lasted for many months and taxed all the skill of the French authorities to overcome. The first intimation we had of this rebellion was the news that Mr. and Mrs. W. Johnson, of the Friends' Mission, with their little girl, stationed at Arìvonimàmo, about thirty miles west of the Capital, had been cruelly murdered by a heathen mob, and the house and premises looted and nearly destroyed. It was difficult to believe that such a humane and kindly man and such a sweet and gentle lady as this missionary couple were, with an innocent child, could have been killed by any Malagasy. Following upon this came information that Mr. and Mrs. Standing, also of the Friends' Mission, had with their children been in much peril for several days. Leaving their country station, they had to travel on foot by night, hiding with friendly Malagasy during the day, with their faces darkened and wearing the native *làmba* ; and so they were able at length to reach the Capital in safety. The same dangers were also experienced by the Rev. E. O. MacMahon and his family, of the S.P.G. Mission. A Roman Catholic priest was murdered at a village about twenty-two miles north of the Capital ; and many of our native evangelists were in great danger and narrowly escaped with their lives. French authority could not for some time make itself felt and respected all over such a large country as Madagascar ; and the old native authority having come to an end, the lawless and heathen element among the Malagasy took advantage of the interregnum to show its hatred of foreign rule and of the religion brought by foreigners.

In January 1896 General Duchesne left the Capital to return to France, leaving the best impression as an able and kindly disposed man, having shown great humanity in his conduct of the campaign, as well as towards the Malagasy during his three or four months' exercise of the supreme authority in the country. Four days after his departure the first Governor-General, M. Hippolyte Laroche, arrived in Antanànarìvo. M. Laroche had been an officer in the French navy, and we were all impressed in his favour when several of us called to pay our respects soon after his arrival. We were glad to hear that he was a Protestant, and so were most of the Malagasy, feeling that he was one with them in religious matters. The Malagasy Queen, it should be noted here, was allowed by General Duchesne to retain her title and her palaces, although the Prime Minister and others of the native Government were exiled to Réunion. M. Laroche always treated her Majesty with great courtesy and accompanied her on various public occasions.

About a month after the arrival of the Governor-General, there came also two French Protestant pastors, M. Henri Lauga and M. F. H. Krüger, to confer with us, who had been in Madagascar for many years, as to the best way in which a French mission could work together with us. For the conquest of the great island by France had aroused the French Protestant churches to take part in the evangelization of the country, and they were prepared to send out a number of missionaries in a very short time. Our committee gladly allowed these two gentlemen the use of our Rest House as their residence among us, and during their stay of several months in Madagascar, we had most pleasant and cordial intercourse with them. The results of their visit may be better spoken of more fully in another chapter, when describing the work of societies other than the L.M.S.

Meanwhile, the political situation became more and more serious. The anti-European and anti-Christian spirit became more violent and widely-spread among the heathen and the only nominally Christian Malagasy. As already noticed, large rebel camps were formed at two places in my own district, and at these heathen ceremonies were carried on. The rebellion spread from the west in several directions, so that from several of our country stations the missionaries felt it desirable to retire to the Capital for a time. Churches of all communions, including the Roman Catholic, were destroyed, to the number of several hundred, some Europeans of different nationalities were killed, while native pastors, evangelists and teachers were the first to be sought for by the rebels, and in several cases were murdered. Many mission stations, with their churches, school-houses, hospitals and residences, were utterly destroyed, involving a loss of many thousand pounds; while the burning of native villages, the destruction of stores of rice, the carrying-off of thousands of cattle, and the capture of large numbers of people as slaves, brought untold misery upon the peaceful inhabitants of the country.

The miscreants who did all this consisted partly of deserted soldiers, who had never given up their arms and ammunition, and to whom were added numbers of those who disliked foreign control, as well as those attached to the old idolatry. In addition to these, the bad and ruffianly element in the population came to the front, glad of a chance to rob and injure the quiet and law-abiding members of the community. From their ability to move about rapidly, unencumbered by the various "impedimenta" of European troops, they were constantly able to evade the forces sent against them, although always suffering heavy loss when daring to face a small number of French soldiers. They sometimes did this, trusting implicitly in their charms against gunshot, but soon becoming woefully undeceived. They became known by the name of *Mèna-làmba*, i.e. "Red-clothes," from their *làmbas* and other dress being unwashed and stained by the reddish soil of the country.

This formidable rising extended in many directions and reached to within seven or eight miles of the Capital, so that night after night the sky was lighted up by blazing villages and churches, and there were rumours that Antanànarìvo itself would be attacked. The old capital, Ambòhimànga, *was* attacked one night, and a few people and a quantity of cattle outside the town were carried off. My wife happened to be staying there at that time with our friends the Peills, and they narrowly escaped being killed as the rebels passed close to the house, for they could hear a discussion as to whether the house should be attacked or not. Sad tales of sorrow and loss reached us from all quarters, the only bright spot in the darkness being the assurance that several people had chosen death rather than give up Christianity, and so had continued the line of Malagasy martyrs for the faith of the Gospel. Many stirring tales of hairbreadth escapes during this time of peril might be told, but perhaps there were none to equal in thrilling interest the story of the siege of a few Europeans and Malagasy in a mission house at Antsìrabé in the month of May of that year.

This cannot be told in full, but the facts are briefly these : Antsìrabé is a town about eighty miles south of Antanànarìvo, where for many years past a strong mission of the Norwegian Lutheran Society had been established, together with hospital, leper asylum, schools, sanatorium and residences. During May the usual yearly conference of all the Norwegian missionaries was held at Fìanàrantsòa, the Betsìléo capital, 110 miles distant, so all the men were away, except two of the senior ones, who were in poor health ; these two, together with sixteen ladies and nine children, were staying in one of the mission houses. At the sanatorium there was then staying M. Gerbinis, the interpreter of the French Resident of the district, and also twenty Malagasy militia, under the orders of two French sergeants ; and before the rebel force arrived M. Gerbinis had procured from Bétàfo, three hours' distance, another sergeant and sixteen more Malagasy soldiers. This force of forty men was, however, insufficient to defend the village, so it was decided to concentrate in Mr. Rosaas's house, a two-storied building with a tiled roof.

At about 10 o'clock in the forenoon of Whit-Monday, May 24th, savage and menacing shouts announced the arrival of the enemy, which numbered at least 1,500 men, 200 of whom were armed with rifles, and the others with clubs and long knives and hammers. A hot fight then followed, which lasted until five o'clock in the afternoon. The sanatorium, the hospital, another mission house, and all the other buildings were looted and then set on fire. When darkness came on, the glare of burning churches to the east and south lighted up the horizon, as well as the destruction of the leper village near, together with its church and hospital.

On Tuesday morning the enemy seemed chiefly employed in carrying off their booty, but at noon they renewed the attack, and a severe fight ensued until the evening. The beautiful church was destroyed, and everything it contained was broken up into little bits. Only a few cartridges remained with the defenders of the house ; and it is no wonder that the inmates looked forward to a cruel death on the morrow, should no help arrive. On Wednesday the brigands did not approach in a mass, but in small parties, and were preparing to burn the verandahs and suffocate the besieged, by bringing a quantity of chillies, which, when powdered and burnt, produce acrid and intolerable fumes. They also brought a barrel of gunpowder, while others came with spades, in order to undermine the house. But mercifully, help was on the way, and before their villainous intentions could be carried out, soon after noon a strong force of French and Malagasy troops, led by M. Alby, the Resident of Bétàfo, was seen approaching, and in a little time arrived on the scene. The rebels were completely suprised and were killed in great numbers, with but little loss on the side of the besieged. One may imagine the terror and suspense of the inmates of the mission house during those terrible two and a half days, and their thankfulness and joy when deliverance came. In the two mission districts of Antsìrabé and Lòharàno, no fewer than seventy-five churches were burnt and destroyed.

So the months of 1896 passed on and the rebellion continued, spreading to the northern provinces, and gradually became a very serious menace to French authority. It was said that the chief military officers, disliking to be under the command of a civilian Governor-General, did not make all the effort they might have exerted to suppress the anti-foreign rising. However that may have been, the Home Government recalled M. Laroche, who left the Capital towards the end of September; but just before his departure he issued a proclamation, by which slavery was abolished in Madagascar, and all slaves were set free. For this act alone he deserves grateful remembrance, and thus, at one stroke, a bad system came to an end. We had feared that there would be much disturbance from such a great social change, but it passed off without difficulty. In a few hours from the announcement by large posters on Sunday morning, September 27th, several hundred slaves were on their way south to the districts from which their parents and grandparents had been chiefly captured in former wars; while a good many who had been kindly treated by their owners and been regarded as members of the families with whom they lived, remained as paid servants in Imèrina. This great social revolution pressed most hardly upon the lower class of free people, who, in a great many instances, lost the only helper they possessed, for no compensation was paid for the loss that almost every family sustained, wealthy people losing from a dozen to twenty or thirty slaves. One could not but feel some sympathy with the poorer free Malagasy, who depended so much upon their one or two dependents for help in their houses and in their rice-fields and agricultural work. Going out into the country to preach on that Sunday morning, I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw the proclamation on the walls in several places, and gradually realized that such an evil thing as slavery was really at an end.

In place of M. Laroche, in the month of October, came the new Governor-General, General Gallieni, an officer who had gained much credit in the wars in Tonquin and the Soudan. Soon after his arrival, several of us called upon him to pay our respects. He received us politely but coldly, and was evidently not much disposed to be friendly to us English missionaries. This was not surprising when we heard that his three principal objects in coming to Madagascar were: (1) to put down the rebellion; (2) to crush the power and the prestige of the Hovas; and (3) to destroy the influence of the London Missionary Society, which, he had been informed, was the chief enemy of France in the island! Of course, this was perfectly untrue, and had probably come from the Jesuits and French officials in order to injure us in the eyes of the General. From the moment French authority was established in the island, we had exhorted our people to obey the laws and to pay all proper respect to their rulers and all officials of Government. We had begun teaching French in our College and High Schools, and had given up any English teaching, small as that was, in the same institutions. But it is difficult to overcome prejudice, and for a long time our position was not an easy or pleasant one, and we had to act with the greatest caution, especially because, after a short time, the island was for many months under martial law, and we knew we might be ordered to leave the country at a very short notice. We knew also that there were spies everywhere, and that all we did was reported to the Government—and many things we did *not* do, or say either—and that the sermons we preached, the lessons read, the prayers offered, and the hymns given out to be sung, were all made known to the officials.

Very soon after the General's arrival he told the Queen that she had better resign her position, since royalty was an anomaly in a republic ; and so her Majesty, with her aunt and a few personal attendants, was sent to Réunion, and eventually to Algeria, where she was to live with a fairly sufficient allowance for her maintenance. It was wise in the General to do this, as, had the Queen remained in the country her name would have been exploited by those disaffected to French rule, and so have brought undeserved discredit upon herself. We all felt sorry for her to have to leave her native land, for she had always acted kindly to us, and had taken a sincere interest and share in all Christian work. She kept loyalty during her exile to her Protestant faith and training, notwithstanding the efforts made to induce her to become a Roman Catholic. It should be noted here that Madagascar was announced by the General to be no longer a " Protectorate," but a " Colony " of France.[1]

And now that the heathen rebellion and persecution of Christianity was still unsubdued, there began that Jesuit persecution of Protestants which has already been described in brief in Chapter X. This went on with more or less virulence for two years, with little check from the French authorities. General Gallieni was busy organizing the government of the colony and arranging its bureaux of law and finance, customs, education and police, posts and telegraphs, and many others ; and especially in taking vigorous measures to put down the rebellion.

But we soon had an unpleasant reminder of the third object of the General's mission to Madagascar in an intimation from him that he required our fine large hospital at Isoàvinandrìana for military purposes. This was not L.M.S. property, although we took a large share in the expense of its maintenance, for it had been almost entirely erected by money generously given by members of the Society of Friends, and had cost from £5,000 to £6,000. But we felt it a great blow to our two missions, for medical work had been an important part of our plans for benefiting the Malagasy from the first. Still, there was no help for it, and the building had to be given up; all that could be done was to urge that adequate money compensation should be given for it; and eventually, indeed some time afterwards, this was granted, although it was declared to be a matter of favour, and not of obligation.

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[1] Since writing the above, the ex-Queen has passed away, as we confidently believe, in the faith of the gospel.

But this was only the beginning of our troubles, for early in January of the next year (1897) we heard that our large College building, including its two residences, and also our Boys' High School house immediately below it, were to be taken by the Government. We felt that this was a still more serious blow to our work and to our prestige as a mission, and there is no doubt that it was intended to be such. The ostensible reason given for this seizure of our most important institutions was that the General greatly needed a large building for Law Courts, and the school-house for other Government offices. He also intimated that he must have our Girls' High School house, too, but that this building need not be given up *at present*. The after-history of the two school-houses showed that there was no real necessity for taking either of them; it was only to strike a blow at the too powerful London Missionary Society.

All that we could do under the circumstances was to press our claim for reasonable compensation, and this was allowed after some bargaining, and our Society was paid £4,000 for the College and its site, and £1,000 for the school-house. We could not have then bought land and erected similar buildings elsewhere for less than double those sums; but it was thought wise not to press our claims for more. Probably General Gallieni felt, and the French Government thought also, that it would not be good policy to irritate an important section of the English nation too far, by pressing their rights of conquest, and so matters were arranged.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FRENCH CONQUEST OF MADAGASCAR AND ITS EFFECTS UPON MISSIONS AND CHRISTIANITY IN THE ISLAND: PART II

In the requisitioning of the L.M.S. College building and of our Boys' High School, we believed that the General thought he had struck a mortal blow both at our collegiate work and our school work by taking these important buildings; indeed, one of the French papers exulted in the idea that our "propaganda" had thus been crushed. But we were not going to give up either of these parts of our work; we "laid low" and bided our time; our colleagues, the Sharmans, removed to the further (the south) end of the city ridge, and there, at Ambòhipòtsy, formed a hostel for a number of boys from the country. Mr. Sharman took the "secular" college students, then increased in number, to the Ampàmarìnana Memorial Church, and in the vestry and under the galleries, and also in the school-house, carried on classes, thus beginning what soon became a very large school. I, on the other hand, took the "ministerial" students to the Fàravòhitra Memorial Church, and in its vestry and under its large end gallery, made temporary class-rooms for myself and my two native assistants; and there we carried on the work for three years or so, until we were able to erect new buildings both for our College teaching and for a larger boys' school-house than we had before. Mr. Sharman and I tried to help each other, although our work was separated, by taking certain classes every week, he with my "ministerial" and I with his "secular" students.

Meanwhile the Jesuits continued their attacks upon our Protestant Christians and their robbery of our Church buildings. Besides this, the largest country church in my district, that at Ilàfy, was taken by the military as a hospital, and before that as a barracks ; so that when I went there one Sunday morning to preach, I found that the soldiers had taken possession of the large platform where the pulpit was ; and in different parts of the church they were whistling and singing and talking, and cleaning their accoutrements, so it was rather difficult for me to conduct a service in a corner of the building with the little handful of people who dared to meet together. The next time I went there, the church was closed to us altogether, and not only there, but at neighbouring villages also, the people seemed quite cowed and afraid to meet in their churches.

Worse than this, however, was the taking possession of our Memorial Church at Ambòhipòtsy, which was used as a barracks for many months. Fires were kindled all round it ; meat and other food was cut up on the Communion table, and the stone pillars were plastered with military orders. And we were told that it was on such an important strategical point of the city that it would never be restored to us. Happily, however, this prediction was not fulfilled.

The animus against English missionaries, especially us of the L.M.S., did not diminish, as shown, amongst many other things, by the following incident : One Sunday morning about this time, after getting home from service, a message came to me to say that our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Peill, at Ambòhimànga, had been accused of communicating with the rebels, and had in consequence been imprisoned ! It transpired that our good comrades were said to have had a cannon in their possession ! which they had handed to the rebels—the heathen rebels, who had destroyed scores of our churches, killed many of our people, and laid the country waste ! Could the force of folly further go ? They had to go under arrest and be examined by the commanding officer, and were then allowed to return home on parole, and were carefully watched for some time afterwards. There was such difficulty and opposition at two of our country stations that Mr. Edmonds and Mr. W. Huckett decided to leave Madagascar, the former going to Travancore, and the latter to Samoa. Our mission on the south-east coast had to be given up, Mr. Pryce Jones also leaving the island

and joining the New Guinea Mission, the work being eventually transferred to the Norwegian Lutheran Society.

Before most of these events occurred, however, the anti-English feeling, especially with regard to our schools, had become so strong that after consultation with the missionaries of the Paris Society, it was agreed (in March 1897) to hand over all our elementary country schools to them. As these were almost all held in the village churches, a plate saying that they were "French Protestant school-houses" was affixed above the chief doorway of them all; and much to the perplexity and sorrow of our teachers, we had to tell them that for the future they would be under the direction of the French Mission, by which also they would be paid. So that for three or four years, although the churches were still under the care of the L.M.S., the schools were under the Paris Mission. It was an anomalous state of things, but it probably saved the situation and tided us over a very anxious and difficult time.[1]

General Gallieni gradually came to understand better what English missionaries really were, and especially after a tour round the north of the island, where he saw the condition of the unevangelized tribes of the country. Among them he could find no one who had been instructed in any way, or who could read and write and give any help in government business. But on returning to the central provinces, he found scores and scores of young men who were competent to serve as interpreters and clerks and government officials; and the great majority of these had been trained in the schools of the Society he had so distrusted as the chief enemy of France! He heard also in many places of native doctors doing all they could to help the sick with medicine and advice; and these again had been taught by English doctors of the same suspected Society. All this helped to open his eyes, and to alter his feeling towards us.

This change of view was greatly aided also by the visit, towards the close of 1897, of Dr. R. Wardlaw Thompson, foreign secretary of the L.M.S., and Mr. Alderman (since then,

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[1] The burden eventually proved too heavy for our friends of the Paris Society, and in the year 1900 the direction of our L.M.S. day-schools was resumed by our own Society.

Sir) Evan Spicer, as a deputation from the Society at home. Dr. Thompson's broad and statesmanlike conduct of his mission, and Mr. Spicer's *bonhomie* and genial ways, did much also to help the General to a more kindly policy towards English missionaries. The time spent by the deputation in Madagascar—only eight weeks—was too short to enable them to thoroughly examine all parts of our work in the two central provinces; besides which, the work was still so much disturbed by the destruction caused by the heathen rebels, and then by the malice of the Jesuits, that it was impossible for them to see it in its real extent and importance. But still, their visit gave us much help and encouragement. They empowered us to secure land and to erect new buildings thereon, for our College and High School, and to carry on each of these with all our energy. They also approved of our transferring to the Paris Society a large section of our work included in several mission districts, both in Imèrina and Bétsiléo, and also the eastern coast mission of Tamatave. In the Capital two large churches were handed over to them; and in all, about 500 congregations, leaving over 700 to be still superintended by the L.M.S. Before the deputation left us, General Gallieni announced publicly that he should not take our Girls' Central School building, as he had at first intended to do. This very welcome statement was made in the school itself to Messrs. Thompson and Spicer, at a prize-giving to which the General had been invited.

Including a furlough in France, General Gallieni's connection with Madagascar lasted for nine years, during which he accomplished a difficult task in repressing all disorders, bringing the whole of the country under strong and firm government, in settling its administration, and in promoting agriculture and colonization. He appeared to lose all his first anti-English prejudices, and he was manly and honest enough to practically acknowledge that he had been mistaken, for on two or three occasions he spoke warmly of the great work the L.M.S. missionaries had done for the enlightenment and civilization of the Malagasy, as well as the medical work done for them for many years. He took lessons in English from Mr. Standing, of the Friends' Mission, and was able to speak our language fluently before leaving the country. To many of us personally he showed special kindness, nominating Mr. Baron and myself among the first members of the *Académie malgache,* which he founded. I received from him a handsome present of four volumes of a valuable work he had caused to be written for the Government; and in the year 1904, hearing that in my earlier years I had been connected with the civil engineering profession, and had taken part in railway levelling and surveying, he gave Mr. Standing and me a five-days' trip along the railway then in course of construction between Tamatave and Antanànarìvo. This line was only then completed up to the lower belt of forest, but we were sent down to it by motor-car; a special train was put at our disposal; the officers in charge of the works were directed to treat us as the General's guests, and to show us all the drawings and estimates, etc., connected with the railway line.[1] I need hardly say that we had a most enjoyable time.

One more instance of the General's kindness I must not omit to mention. During one year of his rule, I was greatly impressed by accounts I had heard of the distress of the Malagasy in several districts from the heavy taxation. I therefore, with much hesitation, wrote to General Gallieni telling him what I had heard, and asking him, with apologies for interfering in such matters, whether it would not be possible to lighten the people's burdens. The General replied in the kindest manner, and said that in order that I might see how he was placed as regards raising a certain amount of revenue in the colony, he would send two officials to my house with all the books showing expenditure and income. Accordingly two gentlemen came bringing these, and very fully and politely answered all my questions; and I saw clearly that it was as the General had said—very difficult to obtain the necessary income without this taxation. But I thought it very kind of him not to take the slightest offence; and I have often wondered how our Chancellor of the Exchequer would answer a foreigner making inquiries and complaints as to English taxation!

When at length General Gallieni retired from his position in Madagascar, he had gained the respect of the Malagasy as an upright ruler, trying always to do what was just and fair to the people; and we English residents had come to regard him, not only as an able soldier and a wise administrator, but also as a personal friend. Many who read these pages will remember that when the German armies were threatening Paris, he was appointed Governor of the Capital, and made energetic efforts for its defence should the city have been actually besieged.

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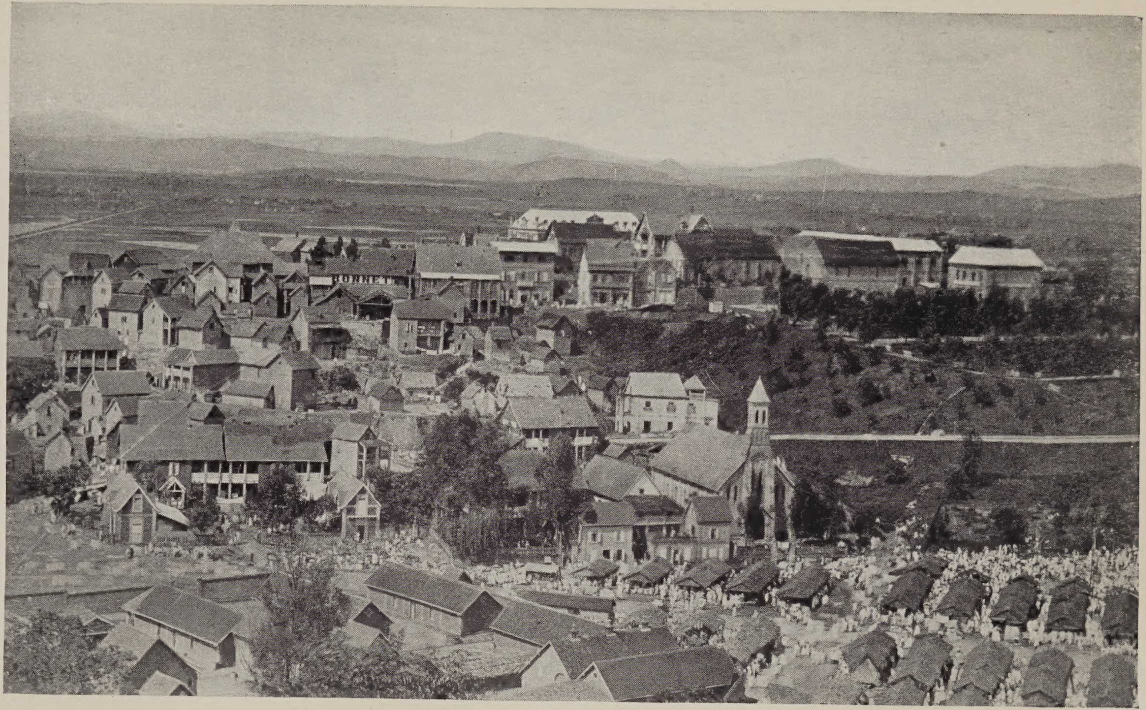
[1] See *Sunday at Home,* March 1905, "A Railway Excursion in Madagascar."

General Gallieni was succeeded by a very different person as Governor-General, M. Victor Augagneur, who had been Mayor of Lyons, and was said to be an ardent Socialist; and therefore some people expected a greater amount of liberty would be given to the Malagasy under his rule. But we soon found that the new head of the Government was a strong opponent of all Christian teaching and influence, and his coming was soon very disastrous to mission work.

The value of education had been recognized by every society ever since the introduction of Christianity into the island, as shown in Chapter VIII; and since the re-opening of the country to missionary effort in 1862, every missionary has given much attention to the schools of his district as one of the most important parts of his work, since from these schools have come the preachers, the pastors, the teachers, the evangelists and the Christian workers in our churches, as well as the greater part of the intelligence and enlightenment then existing in Madagascar. That country owes an immense debt of gratitude to the missionary societies for the large sums they expended every year for thirty to forty years previously on schools, and for all the labour and pains bestowed on them by the missionaries. But without the slightest consideration for those who had done so much for the country, and for the work which had produced an intelligent community, and to which the Government itself owes the greater portion of its own paid native officials, and without even consultation with the French educational authorities, M. Augagneur issued a proclamation on November 23rd which had the effect of closing nine-tenths of our country schools.

Within two months of that date, no teaching was to be any longer allowed in churches; and as in nineteen of every



SUBURB OF ANÀLAKÈLY AND MARKET-PLACE, ANTANÀNARÌVO

twenty cases the church house was also the school-house—built quite as much for use as a school as for worship, and perfectly well suited for the purpose—the proclamation put an end to religious, or indeed any, education in the great majority of the villages. It was manifestly impossible in such a short time to build school-houses, even if sites could have been obtained, or money contributed at once by the village churches for the purpose. Besides this, it was just at the beginning of the rainy season, when almost all building ceases, as bricks burnt or unburnt cannot be made during the heavy rains. The injustice and hardship of all this was intensified by the fact that the few schools up to that date provided by Government could not accommodate a tenth part of the children then learning in mission schools. Many thousands of children were therefore left without any opportunity of gaining any instruction. There could be no doubt that this, as well as other acts of Government officials, showed the Governor-General's hatred of all religion, and his determination to cripple its influence as much as possible. Of course all other societies suffered in the same way, except the Roman Catholics, who managed to evade a good deal of the new regulations, or to get the authorities to wink at their evasion. The Norwegian Mission in the south of the island were more hardly treated even than ourselves.

I felt bound to take advantage of any loophole left us by the proclamation, and accordingly on Sunday, December 23rd, I left preaching altogether that day and visited nine of the larger churches in my district, urging the people, before another month should elapse, to buy, or hire, or borrow native houses, and fit them up so as to carry on the school work. I found everywhere an earnest desire to preserve the schools, if possible, and in several cases this was done, and dwelling-houses were made to serve as temporary school buildings. I spent another long Sunday afternoon again in going round to the chief centres to remind the people that in a little over a fortnight the new law would come in force. I was thus enabled to save, for a time, at least, the majority of my schools ; and I believe if this plan had been generally followed, many more of our mission schools might also have been retained. In three or four cases the stronger village churches in my district built school-houses as soon as the season permitted; but where this was not done, the school authorities would not allow a dwelling-house to be used as a permanent school-house, as the regulations as regards size and height and other conditions could not be complied with.

Every missionary felt that this action of the Governor-General was a great calamity for the people and a gross piece of injustice. It was the heaviest blow to mission work since the days of persecution, and we had therefore soon to consider what could be done to lessen its evil effects, for if we lost the children for Christian teaching, it would be a dark outlook for the future of Christianity.

The first thing we decided must be done was to improve and strengthen Sunday School work. Systematic lessons for three different grades of scholars were prepared every month; preparation classes were formed for instructing the teachers; and yearly examinations arranged for testing the children's progress in Bible knowledge. But something more was seen to be necessary, and so a kind of "Sunday School on week-days" was also begun in villages where there was no congregational day school; and on Thursday afternoons, when the official schools had a half-holiday, these Scripture classes were held. These classes were not as successful as we hoped, partly from the difficulty of securing suitable teachers, and partly from their having to be held on a holiday afternoon; and also because some of the more ignorant parents think they will be blamed by the authorities if their children who learn in government schools are sent to missionary teaching. Still, the classes have to some extent helped to supply religious instruction to a large number of children; and the Christian Endeavour movement has also helped in the same direction and has prevented some of the ill effects of purely secular teaching.

All kinds of religious teaching were the more needed because, for a considerable time, especially during M. Augagneur's rule, the government schools were not merely negative towards Christianity, but they were employed as a distinctly anti-religious propaganda. The teachers in those schools were ordered to require the children to come to school on Sunday morning, thus preventing them from attending church; and at these times they were told to teach that there was no God; that there never was an historic person like Jesus Christ; and that the Bible was a collection of legends and fables, unworthy of the belief of any sensible person. The need of more religious teaching by the churches and the missions was therefore more urgent than ever, especially so long as a man like M. Augagneur was at the head of the Government. It must be said that many teachers who had been brought up as Christians in our schools and churches refused to obey these instructions, and chose rather to resign their positions and good salaries than do what they knew was wrong. Others, with less moral courage, obeyed in a half-hearted way and evaded as much as they dared the Governor-General's orders. This was M. Augagneur's way of carrying out the profession of perfect religious liberty allowed by the French Republic to its subject peoples! It was well for the Malagasy when his five-years' term of office came to an end; and his successors, MM. Picquié and Garbit, have been more liberal in their treatment of English missionaries, although they could not reverse what had been already done. Our alliance with France in the great struggle with Germany did something to bring about a more pleasant feeling towards us.

We can only sum up very briefly what are the effects of political changes upon the country, and especially on missionary effort and Christianity.

First, then, we gladly recognize many changes for the better which have been effected by the French conquest. Among these are the pacification of the country and the establishment of law and order all over it. The raids by the Sàkalàva from the west, and the frequent carrying away of cattle and of people in considerable numbers, has been effectually stopped. Justice is administered, on the whole, in a fairly satisfactory fashion. Good roads have been made all over the country, and on some of the principal routes a motor-car service is maintained, as well as postal and telegraph communication throughout the island. A railway has now for fourteen years connected Tamatave and the Capital, and other lines are being constructed from Antanànarìvo north and south in the central provinces.

Agriculture and the planting of new fruits and vegetables has been greatly promoted, especially through agricultural shows, and the *Jardins d'Essai* in connection with the schools. New methods of silk culture have been introduced.

Great numbers of trees have been planted, so that in the Bétsiléo province especially, the whole aspect of the country has been altered for the better. The Capital of the island has been transformed into a handsome city by the erection of numbers of good buildings, the planting of three or four small parks, and the making of gardens with flower-beds, etc., in many places throughout the city ; and by the construction of roads with easy gradients in all directions, so that the summit, rising 600 feet above the plain, is reached without the slightest difficulty. Sanitary matters are attended to, and perhaps the greatest benefit that French rule has conferred is the bringing of a plentiful supply of good water from the forest region thirty miles away to the east. This is distributed through every street by pipes, and can be drawn night and day from pumps fixed about every hundred yards. The city is well lighted by electricity derived from power produced by forest waterfalls and rapids ; and power is also used from the same source for printing offices and manufactories. Some of the larger towns, as Fìanàrantsòa, Tamatave, Majunga and others, have also benefited in the same way as Antanànarìvo.

A considerable number of native doctors and surgeons have been trained in the Government medical schools, and have been placed all over the country in charge of small hospitals and dispensaries, although too often it happens that their supplies of drugs and other necessary equipment is far too small for the needs of the people. Nurses and midwives have also been instructed and attached to many of the hospitals.

As already mentioned (p. 287), General Gallieni founded an " Académie malgache " for the study of the scientific aspects of Madagascar and the promotion of research into its geology, botany, zoology, and physical geography, and for collecting its folk-lore, history, and the study of the Malagasy language. A Museum in one of the old royal palaces contains a good collection of natural history specimens and a library ; and in the chief palace is a very interesting assemblage of objects connected with the old native monarchy. In the most modern of the royal houses a separate room is devoted to articles of dress, jewellery, furniture, and household property belonging to each of the seven last sovereigns of the island; while in the centre room their handsome state robes are displayed.[1]

Unfortunately there is, as will have been already seen, a reverse to an otherwise very pleasing picture. Some of the shadows have been pointed out clearly in the preceding pages, especially the stoppage of such a large part of our educational work. The anti-Christian spirit manifest in that act of the Governor-General's was also shown in the efforts of the French Freemasons and Socialists to diffuse infidel opinions among the Malagasy young men, by tracts and booklets trying to show that Buddha was a higher teacher than our Lord, and in other ways endeavouring to shake their religious beliefs. We therefore commenced a series of popular lectures in defence of revealed religion and of Christianity; some of these were delivered on Sunday afternoons, after the regular services were concluded, and attracted crowded audiences in one of our largest churches. Of these courses, some lectures were delivered by missionaries and some by several of our most intelligent Malagasy pastors and college tutors, and were very effective and excellent addresses. Other courses of lectures were delivered on a weekday evening, as numbers of young men employed in shops and government offices were not free until after five or six o'clock (just like young men in England). These were given in the French Protestant Church, as that building was the only church then furnished with electric light; and they also attracted large audiences. Much good was certainly done by our efforts to "contend earnestly for the faith."

Another serious blow to mission work and Christian influence which M. Augagneur effected was his summary order that our Young Men's Christian Association should be immediately broken up. This had been commenced during General Gallieni's time; a large house on the chief thoroughfare of the Capital had been secured, with sufficient ground adjoining it for tennis and other games; and one of our most intelligent young pastors had been sent to France and England so that he might become thoroughly acquainted with Y.M.C.A. methods in Europe, and on his return act as the secretary and manager. All the five Protestant missions in the central province had joined in this effort for the spiritual and mental benefit of our young men; but without giving any reason for his action, M. Augagneur ordered the Association to be at once dissolved.[1]

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[1] It must not be forgotten also that a large part of Madagascar has been accurately surveyed, and maps prepared to a variety of scales, so that the country is now very well known and its physical geography made perfectly clear. It is highly creditable to the French officers of the *Génie* that so much valuable work has been done in so comparatively short a time.

Something of the same kind was done with regard to our little societies of Christian Endeavour; and we were obliged for several years to drop their original name and merely speak of them as Scripture classes. We lost in consequence considerable numbers of our young folks, who were afraid of being suspected as disobedient to the Government if they continued to attend the meetings.

(*a*) In the observance of Sunday as a day of rest and worship, the influence of the French Government has been hostile to it from the first. The first Christian queen, Rànavàlona II, very soon after her accession, directed that all Sunday markets and trading should cease, but the new Government ordered them to be opened again; indeed, in some instances people were threatened and obliged to bring their wares on the Sunday. Races and other amusements were commenced by government patronage on the Sundays, and fêtes and public festivals were generally arranged for on that day. While the new roads were being made, the people were constantly called out to do this work on Sunday, and many native officials taking their cue from their French superiors, often exceeded them in their demands upon the people for such work. In some districts the elder men were constantly called up, on some pretext or other, on the Sunday mornings; while the young men and young women were ordered to attend the native governor in the afternoons to practise singing and dancing. The effect of all this on the Sunday congregations may be easily imagined.

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[1] Since the above words were written, permission has been given to recommence the Y.M.C.A. in the Capital.

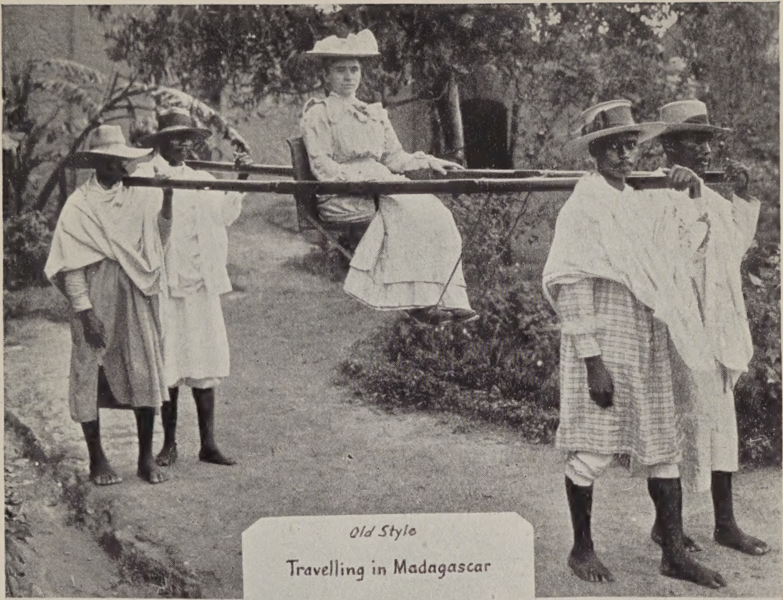
(*b*) During the first few years after the conquest, while there was a large number of French officers and soldiers still stationed in the island, it became more difficult than ever to keep the girls from impurity, unless under the care of a missionary lady and living in her house. The native standard of morality was low enough before, but sank much lower from the influence of foreigners, who had no care at all for it, and apparently considered the native women and girls as simply made for their pleasure. From high French officials down to the common soldiers, almost every one had a native mistress, and it was the recognized duty of Malagasy officials of inferior rank to obtain girls for their French superiors. To become the mistress of an officer or high official was therefore looked upon by the majority of people as no disgrace at all, but rather as an honour to be sought for; for it meant for a girl to have a better supply of good dresses, boots and shoes, the being carried in a palanquin, and the command of money. Many French officers had no scruple at all in riding openly about the Capital accompanied by their mistresses; and sometimes the girls would come to the churches, where they excited much attention—and no doubt envy on the part of others—by their fine dresses and ornaments.

(*c*) Another evil consequence of the change of Government in Madagascar was the false accusation of innocent people. A large proportion of the native governors of villages and districts were renegade Protestants, who, when the conquest was effected, called themselves Roman Catholics to secure French favours. And being installed in authority, there now came a fine opportunity of paying off old grudges and dislikes and accusing other people as disloyal, especially their Protestant acquaintances, as well as squeezing people for money, putting them on government work, road-making, etc., and generally playing the petty tyrant. And the French officers, who were mostly ignorant of the language, and knew very little about the Malagasy, too often placed implicit confidence in these fellows, who were often the worst specimens of native that could be found; and being officials, it was exceedingly difficult to convince their superiors that they could do anything wrong.

The facts as to Jesuit accusations against Protestant pastors and others have already been shown in Chapter XV; and although such shameful conduct became less frequent after General Gallieni obliged the priests to restore the great majority of Protestant churches stolen by them, isolated instances of false accusation often occurred, especially against our native evangelists. For example, one of these good men was persistently persecuted, accused, fined fifty dollars—equivalent to as many pounds with us—condemned to six months' imprisonment and hard labour. His only offence was endeavouring to protect the property of the L.M.S.; therefore he was stigmatized as "English," and not a loyal subject of France.

It had been the custom of the Malagasy country churches for many years to supplement the small money help paid by the Society to the evangelists and school teachers by gifts of rice and some other produce, as harvest time came round, and this was almost always willingly done. But a government proclamation forbade the people to give this help to their pastors and teachers any longer; this order has, however, been recently much modified.

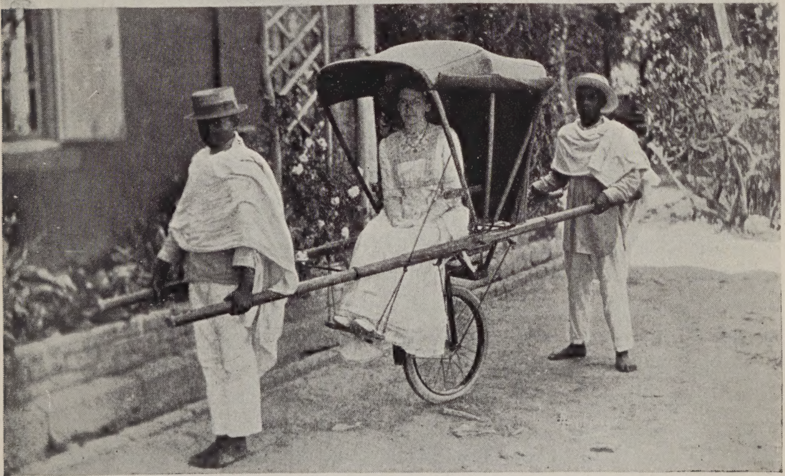
It will be seen therefore from the foregoing paragraphs that there have been many shadows to modify the undoubted lights of French occupation of Madagascar. Some of these have happily become less dark than they were for several years succeeding the conquest. The shameful immorality spoken of in paragraph (*b*) has been very much diminished by the great reduction of the European force of soldiery, and also by the large proportion of officers and officials having their wives now with them in Madagascar. The evils described in paragraph (*c*) have also much lessened, and there is a better class of native officials. It cannot be said that there is any improvement in Sunday observance; but during the great European war there was a more friendly feeling on the part of the French authorities towards English people. Still, there are many hindrances to missionary work, and especially to its *extension* by evangelistic effort. It is often very difficult to get permission to erect a native chapel, and a number of tedious formalities have to be gone through to obtain it. Where there is no chapel, special leave must be obtained before one can hold a religious service in a native house, and any



Old Style

Travelling in Madagascar

New Style



outdoor worship or meeting is strictly forbidden. It is therefore hard work to extend the gospel in still heathen places; and while individual French officials in country districts are often kind and friendly, others, especially corporals or sergeants placed in authority, are often tyrannical to the people and hostile to English missionaries. The government regulations with regard to the legal marriage of the Malagasy, and the numbers of witnesses required, often from long distances, frequently make it very difficult for the people to be properly united; and it sometimes appears as if it was intended to put obstacles in the way of their being married. Other grievances might be adduced of the difficulties produced by the French regulations; but what has been already said is probably quite sufficient to show that, in some respects, the Malagasy have had unpleasant times, and that English missionaries have not always found it easy to go on with their work.

Probably most French officials in Madagascar would like to see us out of the country; but, of course, we have a perfect right to be there, and to work there just in the same way as French missionaries, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, have a right to work in Basutoland and other British colonies. We want no patronage, or favour, or subsidy from the French Government, but simply liberty and protection to carry on work for the benefit of the people and the colony; and what we freely give to the missionaries of the French and other nations we have a right to demand from the French authorities in Madagascar.

The persecution of Malagasy Christians by the Jesuits has been already described in Chapter X; and the latest information tells us that the Roman Catholic propaganda has assumed a more aggressive character than ever before, and that the priests adopt methods of extension which are "the very climax of cunning." This is largely helped by their much greater number of workers than the Protestant societies can possibly place in the country; besides which, they make vigorous efforts to get Roman Catholics appointed to official positions in the Government. They still inform the ignorant country people that Protestantism is the religion of the English only, while Catholicism is the religion of France, so that if they do not become Catholics the

French Government will regard tham with disfavour. They have large hostels for boys and girls, many workshops for teaching carpentry and engineering, and farms for instruction in agriculture and fruit-growing, etc. They go out to bless the rice-fields, and in one case a priest baptized a brood of chickens, while another professed to be able to cast out evil spirits. The nuns and sisters visit our Protestant people, and urge them to send their children to the Roman Catholic schools, where they need pay no fees, or purchase school-books, etc. In these and many other ways the Jesuit mission is leaving no stone unturned to advance their own Church and to denounce Protestantism and evangelical missionaries as soul-destroying. At the Centenary celebration it is reported that some of the Romanists said to our people : " Yes, you may make much of *this* occasion, for there will never be another Protestant Centenary in Madagascar ; because in a hundred years' time, all the Malagasy will have become Catholics ! "

CHAPTER XVII

PROTESTANT MISSIONS IN MADAGASCAR OTHER THAN THAT OF THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY: L.M.S. MISSION STAFF: INDUSTRIAL AND MEDICAL MISSION WORK

As already mentioned more than once in these pages, the *London Missionary Society* commenced Christian effort in 1820, and founded the first churches in Madagascar, and carried on that work alone for fifteen years. But after the re-opening of the island to Europeans and to Christianity in 1861, seven other Protestant societies have joined them, and have taken a very important share in the evangelization of the country. Their work and position must therefore be here very briefly sketched.

The *Church Missionary Society* and the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel* both began work in the year 1864, and placed missionaries on the east coast. But the former Society was not disposed to put its clergy under the authority of a "High-church" bishop, and therefore withdrew its agents from Madagascar after ten years. Two of their missionaries went to Japan, where they laboured for a considerable time.

The S.P.G. were then left as the only Anglican mission in Madagascar, and for seven or eight years their work was limited to the east coast; but in 1872 one of their missionaries commenced services in the Capital; and after two years again a bishop, the Rt. Rev. R. K. Kestell-Cornish, was appointed to the oversight of the mission, and took up his residence in Antanànarìvo. Subsequently churches, schools, and a children's hospital were erected; a college for the training of native ministers was commenced about fifteen miles north-west of the Capital, and later still a stone cathedral was built on a commanding position near the centre of the city, not far from the summit of the hill, and was opened in 1889. Towards the west of Antanànarìvo there are a number of villages where S.P.G. churches have been formed ; and about forty-five miles to the south-west is a mission station and district. The chief work of this Society is, however, on the east coast, stretching from Tamatave to about 270 miles southwards. Near Màhanòro the S.P.G. have another college for training native catechists and clergy.

In the year 1866, the *Norwegian Lutheran Missionary Society* commenced a mission in Madagascar, and has gradually strengthened and extended its efforts, so that, since the relinquishing of a great part of its work by the L.M.S. to the Paris Society, it has come to have a larger number of congregations under its guidance than any other society in the island. It has a representative church in Antanànarìvo, and a school, but its strongest position is in Vàkinankàratra, from fifty to eighty miles to the south-west, and also has much work in the Bétsiléo province. At Antsìrabé, in the former of these districts, is a good hospital, a sanatorium, schools, and a very large asylum for lepers, where no fewer than 900 of these unfortunate people are carefully tended and helped. But the Norwegian Society's field of work really spreads across the island, in its southern half, from east to west, and, with the two other Lutheran missions, occupies nearly the whole, to its southern extremity. At Fìanàrantsòa, the Bétsiléo capital, it has a large residential College for training native evangelists and missionaries. I was extremely gratified, during a visit to the Bétsiléo province in 1912, to see and address some seventy students of this College, especially when I was told that among them were men from about half a dozen southern tribes, which are still mostly heathen—Bàra, Sàkalàva, Tanàla, Tanòsy, and Paimòro, as well as Bétsiléo—who, after their three or four years' training, would go back to their own districts to evangelize their fellow-countrymen.

Although one other society preceded the two other Lutheran societies just referred to, it will be best to speak of them here. It is well known that in the United States there are now more Norwegians than there are in Norway; and the missionary zeal of their friends in the mother-country has stimulated the earnest Christians among them to take part in evangelizing Madagascar. In the year 1888 the *American Lutheran Missionary Society* commenced work in the island, and took as their sphere of influence the south-eastern corner of the country, with their headquarters at Fort-Dauphin.

Two years later another American Society commenced work in Madagascar, *The Lutheran Board of Missions*, and has occupied the south-western corner of the island, with its headquarters at Manasòa, in the province of Tulléar. A rather large tract of country in their sphere is, however, but sparsely inhabited, for the rainfall is very small, and the vegetation of a thorny character, resembling that of the Karroo and Kalahari deserts in South Africa. It follows therefore that, except a strip of country on the south-east coast, the greater part of the southern half of Madagascar is occupied by Lutheran missions.

In the year 1867 the *Society of Friends* in England was stirred up to join in evangelistic effort in Madagascar and began work in Antanànarìvo, intending at first to undertake school teaching chiefly, and also the preparation of books. Gradually, however, its missionaries extended their labours to the superintendence of native congregations, so that for a long time past a large district, extending for about sixty miles west of the Capital, has been occupied by its agents, who are placed at six different mission stations. About ten years ago the Society began more aggressive work on heathenism by commencing a mission among the Sàkalàva people at Maintiràno, on the west coast. It has a representative church in Antanànarìvo, a printing press, and good high schools; and for many years joined with the L.M.S. in carrying on a hospital, until this was requisitioned by the French Government in 1897.

The commencement of missionary effort in Madagascar by the *French Protestant Churches*, soon after the conquest of the island by France, has already been described; and also the transference of a large number of native congregations to the Paris Society by the London Missionary Society. It is therefore unnecessary to give further details in this place. The French Mission has a Theological College for training pastors and evangelists at Ambàtomànga, fifteen miles east of the Capital; and it occupies Tamatave, on the east coast, and Majunga, on the north-west coast.

It would not be correct, in this enumeration of missionary societies' work in Madagascar, to omit including that done by the *Isan-ènim-bòlana,* or Imèrina Church Union, which has for many years been also a missionary society and maintains seventeen evangelists at several important centres in the northern half of the island. But these men began to feel so much need of European missionaries' support and guidance that, as has been already described in Chapter VII, English missionaries of the L.M.S. have been again stationed in the Antsihànaka province, and are carrying on both medical and ministerial work among the Sihànaka people.

The *Isan-kèrin-taona,* or Bétsiléo Church Union, also supports several evangelists in the districts south of the capital of the province.

In the year 1913 a Conference of representatives of the seven Protestant Societies working in Madagascar was held at Antanànarìvo; and among other important matters then discussed and agreed upon was the partition of the island between the different societies, so that overlapping might be prevented, and each mission have its definite sphere of action. The area proposed to be occupied by each society was shown by a large map, and gave the *ideal* to be aimed at; another map showed also the *actual occupation* by foreign missionaries at that present time, by which it was seen that "there remaineth very much land to be possessed" for its rightful Lord.

It may not be uninteresting to say something about the members of *the Staff of Missionaries of the L.M.S.* who have carried on its work in Madagascar since the re-opening of the country to Christian effort in 1862. It is of course impossible to mention every one, and only a few words can be said of any one of them; but many have expressed the opinion that the L.M.S., during the first thirty or forty years of the re-established mission, had a body of missionaries of somewhat exceptional abilities, to whom, under

God, was largely owing the remarkable success which has attended its work in Madagascar.

The Rev. William Ellis was the first to arrive at the Capital, in June 1862. He had been in early life a missionary in the South Seas; he had helped American missionaries to settle the orthography of the Hawaiian language; he had filled the office of Foreign Secretary of the L.M.S., during which time he had written the valuable *History of Madagascar* in two volumes; and he had made three visits to the island during the persecution. He was naturally deeply interested in the Malagasy, and immediately after the arrival of the news that the persecuting Queen was dead, he volunteered to go to Madagascar again and re-establish the mission there. He did valuable service during three years, and deserves to be remembered with lasting honour for what he accomplished for the people and the mission.

Mr. Ellis was soon followed by six young missionaries, two of whom were married. Among them was the Rev. R. Toy (1862–1880), a good scholar, who worked hard in the establishment and teaching of the Theological College, writing many of the first text-books for the students in co-operation with his colleague, the Rev. G. Cousins. Mr. Toy also wrote several of the most popular hymns; he died at a comparatively early age from an overworked brain.

Among that first six also was the Rev. Wm. E. Cousins (1862–1899), a good Hebrew and Greek scholar, and who became our first authority on the Malagasy language, and was chosen as the Principal Reviser and chairman of the Committee for the revision of the Malagasy Bible. To this work he devoted eleven of his thirty-seven years of missionary service, and the version thus produced owes a great deal of its accuracy and beauty to his patient care and labour. Mr. Cousins gave much attention to the proverbs, oratory, customs, and folk-lore of the Malagasy, collecting these from native authorities and editing them. His grammar of Malagasy, and his essay on the language, read before the Philological Society, are indispensable to those desiring to seriously study the speech of the people. Mr. Cousins was an instructive preacher, and also wrote some thirty-three of the most popular Malagasy hymns.

After his retirement from active service in Madagascar, it was with great pleasure that all his friends heard that the University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of M.A.

Another of the first six who recommenced the L.M.S. Mission in Madagascar was Mr. John Parrett (1862–1885), who came to superintend the Society's printing establishment. He taught numbers of young Malagasy to print and to bind books, so that a great many of them became excellent workmen and turned out books that for general " get-up " may compare with very good English workmanship. Mr. Parrett did the mission and the country valuable service in this way for many years, eventually leaving the Society's work for a position in the native Government. For a long time he had charge of a large suburban church, and was also an acceptable preacher.

In the year following the re-opening of the island there came, amongst others, the Rev. Joseph Pearse (1863–1905), who soon made his mark as a popular and earnest preacher ; many of his sermons were printed as tracts and books and had a wide circulation, for Mr. Pearse had a very accurate knowledge of Malagasy thought and habits of life, and his addresses were admirably adapted to the native mind. He prepared very full and instructive commentaries on the Epistles to the Corinthians and several other Epistles, as well as many smaller books. With his wife, as true a missionary as himself, he did pioneer work for six years in the Antsihànaka province, and afterwards for fifteen years among the Bétsiléo ; and in addition to his missionary work strictly so called, Mr. Pearse having studied medicine and surgery during furloughs in England, became a very skilled doctor, and was famed far and wide for his ability in curing disease. From the varied and valuable work he did in so many ways, and in different provinces, the beloved name of Joseph Pearse will be long held in affectionate remembrance in Madagascar.

In the year 1864 the Rev. Benjamin Briggs (1864–1904) began work in the island, and during forty years had the almost unique position of superintending an important city church (Ampàmarìnana) and its extensive district during the whole of that time. To his instructive preaching and systematic Bible-classes that district largely owes its advance in Christian life; and its numerous large and well-built churches, many of them plainly visible from the summit of Antanànarìvo, are also proofs of Mr. Briggs's energy and zeal. He filled for many years the office of secretary to the Imèrina District Committee with good judgment and tact; and his *Ten Years' Review* of the L.M.S. Mission remains a valuable record of one of the most important periods of its history.

Later in the same year (1864) the Rev. George Cousins joined the mission, succeeding Mr. Ellis in the oversight of the Ambàtonakànga Memorial Church and district. But five years later Mr. Cousins, together with Mr. Toy, commenced the Theological College, and for its students especially wrote many valuable books (see p. 108, Chapter VI). He became one of the most popular preachers in the native language, and also wrote some half-dozen good hymns. On his second furlough in England, however, the mission lost Mr. Cousins' much-prized help by his being appointed editor of the Society's publications, and later as Joint Foreign Secretary of the L.M.S., an office from which he retired in the year 1909, after twenty-four years' devoted service.

The abilities and popularity as a preacher in Malagasy of the Rev. Charles Jukes (1866–1898) have already been referred to in Chapter XII. Like Mr. Briggs, he remained throughout the whole of his missionary life in charge of one city church (Ankàdibévàva) and its district; and as that district for several years included more than one hundred village congregations, reaching indeed to the sea-coast, a hundred miles distant, it may be imagined that his energies and zeal found ample scope for their exercise, and that he was "in labours more abundant" for the guidance and instruction of what was in fact a very extensive diocese, involving frequent travelling to and fro across the two belts of forest. As a preacher and pastor therefore, Mr. Jukes was much beloved and honoured.

The year 1869 saw the addition to the mission circle of the Rev. James Richardson (1869–1897), who, besides being an ordained missionary, was also a trained teacher. He commenced the Bétsiléo mission at Fìanàrantsòa in 1870. Two years later, however, he returned to Antanànarìvo to take charge of the Normal and Boys' High School. Mr.

Richardson became a very popular preacher in Malagasy; and he did a great work in teaching a large number of his pupils to understand and to teach the Sol-fa system of music and singing, so that eventually a knowledge of it was spread far and wide over Madagascar. He also did valuable service by editing and preparing the *Malagasy-English Dictionary*, of 832 pages; for this and his *Malagasy for Beginners* all students of the language are greatly indebted to him. In an adventurous journey of three months' exploration to the south-west coast in 1877, Mr. Richardson was attacked by robbers, and everything he had was stolen except what he had on, and one of his followers was killed; after escaping with difficulty, he made his way on foot for nearly 250 miles to Fìanàrantsòa. It must not be omitted to note here that he was one of the most prolific of our hymn writers, thirty-three of those in the Malagasy hymn-book coming from his pen.

During the years 1870 to 1873 considerable additions were made to the missionary staff in Madagascar, for the adhesion of the Queen and Government to Christianity greatly increased the congregations and required far more help.

Among these was the Rev. James Wills (1870–1898), who had charge of churches both in Antanànarìvo and then at the ancient capital, Ambòhimànga. Living in the Capital, he took an active part in all good work, especially in the Congregational Church Union (*Isan-ènim-bòlana*), which he served for a considerable time as one of its secretaries, and also writing some valuable books.

In the same year came the Rev. P. G. Peake (1870–1910), who took charge of the country station of Isoàvina, and there, in addition to the care of his district, carried on for many years an Industrial School, at which a large number of native lads were prepared for business life by being taught carpentry, joinery and cabinet work, ironwork and tinwork, etc. From this school there came during seven or eight years alone about 120 competent workmen, chiefly carpenters and joiners; its work has been highly appreciated by the French authorities. The institution became self-supporting, and supplied, among other things, church and school furniture, pulpits, seating, etc., especially that for the Anglican Cathedral and the chief French Protestant church. A goodly number of the youths were baptized during their apprenticeship and became professing Christians. Mr. Peake also founded at Mànankavàly, about five miles north of his station, an Asylum for Lepers, where for many years a large number of these poor afflicted people were housed and supported, and everything done that could be done for the alleviation of their terrible malady; while their spiritual needs were also carefully attended to. This leper village was chiefly supported by funds obtained by Mr. Peake from friends in England. Some time after the French conquest the Asylum was taken over by the Government, but its direction was left in the hands of a devoted French lady who had superintended it for several years previously.

The year 1870 also saw the arrival of the Rev. Wm. Montgomery (1870–1889), a man of remarkable spiritual power and intense earnestness. His fervent enthusiasm in preaching often led him to take off his coat and throw it over the platform railing, so as to give him perfect freedom in speaking. At our weekly mission prayer-meeting he often prayed as if inspired, leaving us all in a glow of devout feeling as if we had been brought very near eternal realities. Mr. Montgomery had charge for nineteen years of the Memorial Church at Ambòhipòtsy and its large district to the south of the Capital, and wrote a commentary on the first half of the Epistle to the Romans.

Together with our Northumbrian brother Montgomery came a Scotch brother, the Rev. Thos. T. Matthews (1870–1904), who, after having charge of the country station of Fihaònana in Vònizòngo for several years, took the superintendence of the "Mother Church of Madagascar," that at Ambàtonakànga. His preaching was much appreciated by the Malagasy, and a number of his sermons were printed as tracts. Mr. Matthews took much interest in Biblical archæology, and published a large book in Malagasy giving the results of modern discoveries in Bible lands. He also wrote an homiletical commentary on the "Sermon on the Mount." His book in English, *Thirty Years in Madagascar*, gives a very true picture of a country missionary's life and work, and also of some of the difficulties he had in town work (see Chapter IX, pp. 171, 172). After retiring from Madagascar, he received from the University of Aberdeen, his native place, the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

The sixth of the additions to the staff in 1870 was the Rev. C. F. Moss (1870–1882), who had been a pastor of English churches for a few years previously, and took charge of the "mother church" at Ambàtonakànga; during his twelve years of service in the island he carried on with zeal the usual activities of a large city church and its extensive country district.

During the two following years we welcomed six new recruits to our ranks, viz., Messrs. Baron, Thorne, Houlder, Stribling, Lord, and Peill, Mr. Thorne and Mr. Lord coming specially to superintend the educational work of the mission spoken of more fully in Chapter VIII. Leaving for a few pages what I have to say about my two brethren engaged in educational superintendence, a few words must be said about the other four new missionaries. My colleague in literary work for more than twenty years was the Rev. Richard Baron (1872–1907), who, working first in country stations in Imèrina and Bétsiléo, took charge for some years of the large city church of Ampàribé. He was an excellent Malagasy scholar, and preached and wrote in the native language with great accuracy and effect. His commentaries on the Gospel of St. Luke and the Epistle of St. James will long continue to help Bible students, and his lessons in French to aid the young people to acquire that language. But while Mr. Baron was a faithful missionary, he was something more, for he was one of those many missionaries of various societies who, by their abilities and research, have greatly advanced scientific knowledge in different parts of the world. After his first furlough in England he was led to study botany, in which he became an expert and at length the chief authority as regards Madagascar. During various journeys he collected and sent to Kew between 4,000 and 5,000 species of plants, three-fourths of which were new to science; and on his return to England he was made a Fellow of the Linnean Society. Mr. Baron then turned his attention to geology, in which, as regards Madagascar, he also became the chief authority. He prepared maps of the geological formations, especially of the north-west of the island, showing the—up to then—unknown series of Secondary and some Tertiary rocks. He gave special attention to petrology, studying this while on furlough with one of the chief English authorities, and teaching himself German in order to master the literature of the subject in that language. After giving an account of Madagascar geology before the Geological Society he was made a Fellow of that learned body, and he also received from the Royal Society a specially fitted microscope for petrological research. Having learnt how to prepare rock-specimens for examination by polarized light, Mr. Baron sent between 400 and 500 of these to the "School of Mines," so that the crystalline rocks of Madagascar have become fairly well known to English geologists.

On more than one occasion Mr. Baron was offered a lucrative position under the French Government in connection with the "Service des Mines" of Madagascar; but he would not forsake his calling as a missionary for worldly advantage. Returning to England in 1907, in weakened health, he died suddenly within a short time from heart failure. He wrote seventeen of the hymns in the Malagasy hymn-book, one of the most popular being a translation of "Rock of Ages."

My old college mate, the Rev. E. H. Stribling (1871–1900) laboured with much zeal and enthusiasm in the Vònizòngo district for several years, together with his first wife. After her death he worked alone for three years with the same whole-heartedness among the Sihànaka people. During furloughs in England he took up as his special duty that of urging the use of "missionary boxes," and he succeeded in getting people to use more than a thousand of such boxes! In the city church of Ampàribé he stirred up fresh enthusiasm among the people by his own zeal, but died at Antanànarìvo in 1900.

In the year 1871 also the Rev. John A. Houlder (1871–1895) joined the staff, and had, during his twenty-four years' service in Madagascar, a very varied experience. Through a variety of circumstances he filled, at one time or another, almost every possible position in the mission, for, as he said to me one day, he had been at different times country and town missionary, chairman, secretary and treasurer of committee, college tutor and school teacher, superintendent of the press, and finally missionary on the coast at Tamatave. So that his book, *Among the Malagasy*, is a very lively and interesting record of his experiences, and some of its illustrations are very clever and amusing. But Mr. Houlder found time to write good commentaries on the Pastoral Epistles, and also to contribute about twenty hymns to our Malagasy hymn-book, one of the most popular being the first in the book, a free translation of Bishop Heber's "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty." As to Mr. Houlder's valuable contribution to our knowledge of Malagasy proverbs, see Chapter III, p. 33. Another of these vignette portraits of my old comrades is that of the Rev. J. Peill (1873–1905), who, for several years as a country missionary, and latterly in the Capital, was one of our popular preachers, and wrote full and excellent commentaries on the Acts of the Apostles, the Gospel and Epistles of St. John. Mr. and Mrs. Peill had the singular happiness of seeing their four sons devote themselves to missionary work in China, three as doctors, and the other as an ordained missionary and college professor. Of the eldest of these, who died of typhoid during an evangelistic journey to Mongolia, his father wrote a memoir under the title of *The Beloved Physician of Tsang-chow.* After his retirement from Madagascar, Mr. Peill did a good deal of deputation work in England; and on one Sunday morning in 1918, while going to preach, he passed away alone in the railway carriage, "and was not, for God took him"; a beautiful ending to a useful and beautiful life.

Mr. Peill's college friend and companion at Ambòhibelòma, the Rev. Wm. C. Pickersgill (1873–1883), worked heartily with his friend for a few years, and then commenced a new station at Majunga on the north-west coast, so as to open up the northern Sàkalàva country to Christian teaching. He did not remain there long, however, as he accepted the position of interpreter and secretary to the Malagasy ambassadors, and accompanied them to Europe and America during the years 1882 and 1883. Subsequently he was appointed Vice-Consul for England at Antanànarìvo, where he remained for a few years, and was there promoted to a consulship in South America.

I must not omit here the names of three lay members of our staff, two of whom have already been mentioned in speaking of educational work in Chapter VIII, viz., Mr. James Cross Thorne (1872–1911), and Mr. Thomas Lord (1873–1910). To the work of these two brethren for many years as inspectors of schools and superintendents of education, many thousands of Malagasy children now grown to be men and women, owe very much for their long-continued and arduous labours in examining the schools of the L.M.S. mission, and in preparing school-books, time-tables, etc. After a lengthened period of this work, both of them took charge of city churches and their mission districts, taking the preaching and all other duties of an ordained missionary. Mr. Thorne "died in harness" at the close of 1911; and Mr. Lord, after thirty-seven years' service in Madagascar, retired in 1910 to a well-earned rest in Australia.

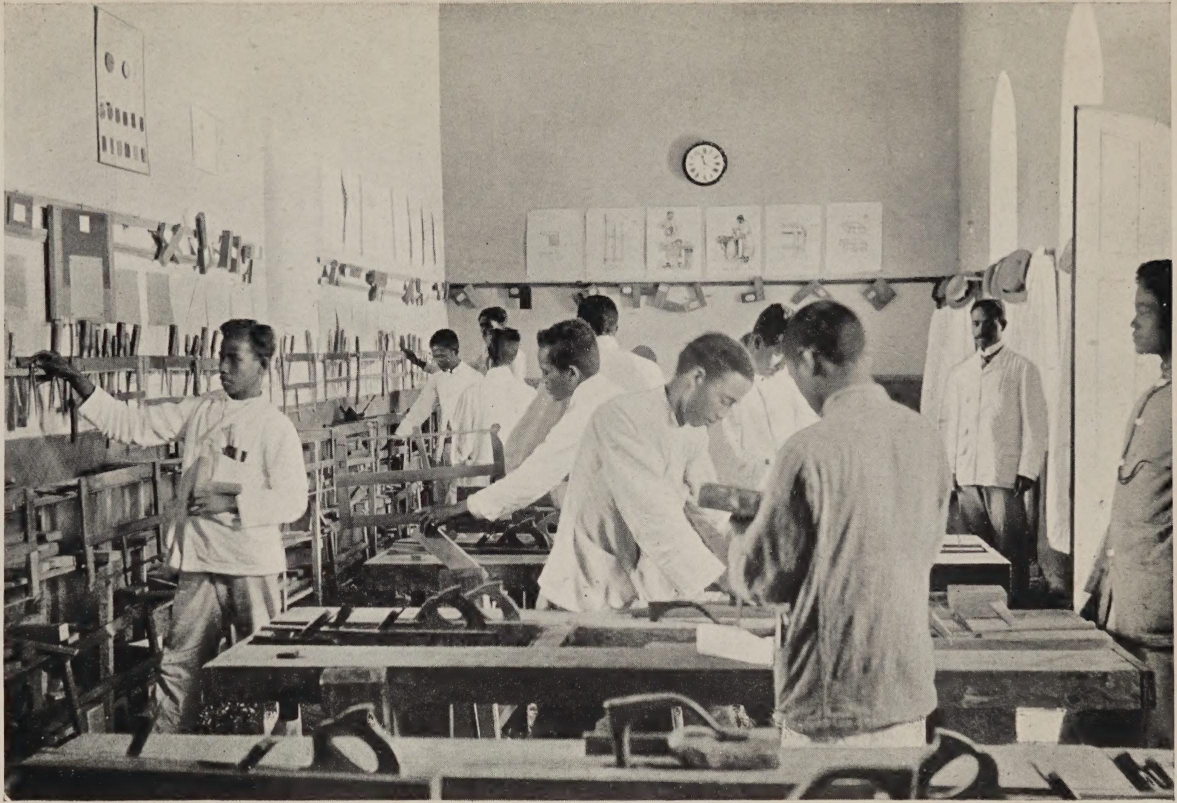
Mr. Stowell Ashwell has been the superintendent of the L.M.S. press for more than thirty-five years, so that he is now the *doyen* of the Imèrina staff. But in addition to the invaluable work he has done for so long in producing the literature required by the mission and the public, Mr. Ashwell has served the Committee for many years as its treasurer, and he has had charge of an important city church; but beyond all that he is known as the kind and ready helper of his brothers and sisters in all sorts of ways. It is impossible to enumerate the varied assistance he has always been glad to give to all who seek his help and advice.

It will be understood that, with the last-named exception, I confine myself in these personal notices of my honoured brethren to those who have retired from foreign service. Others will no doubt in due time record the work done by those who are now in the field, whether they are becoming veterans, or are comparatively or actually new recruits. But a word or two may be added about a younger brother, the Rev. Robert Griffith, who although not permitted through his wife's continued ill-health to serve the mission in Madagascar for more than fourteen years, left his mark on the country by his active interest in all that especially concerned the younger Malagasy. But he has continued to serve it still, and other fields as well, by his appointment as Secretary of the L.M.S. for Wales, where he has been the means of steadily increasing the contributions in support of the Society, and of deepening interest in its work. Although without a medical degree, Mr. Griffith has considerable medical knowledge and skill; and during his residence at Ambòhimànga he was able by that, as well as by much self-denial in nursing the sick, to save many lives and alleviate much suffering. His book, *Madagascar: A Century of Adventure,* is one of a valuable "Survey Series of Handbooks" on the L.M.S. mission fields.

I do not attempt to sketch here the life and work of my brethren in the Bétsiléo and other L.M.S. missions in Madagascar; or the names of Messrs. Brockway, Shaw, Rowlands, and A. S. Huckett, among those who have passed away, as well as those of Messrs. Johnson, Rees, Collins and Green, who are still living, would demand full notice. For particulars of them all the reader must be referred to the "Register of Missionaries and Deputations," edited by myself and published by the London Missionary Society this year.

It will be seen that no attempt has been made here to do more than give the briefest sketches of my honoured brethren who did so much to establish mission work in Madagascar during the first twenty or thirty years after it was recommenced in the island. There were, however, others who only lived a short time, whose names may be mentioned; among these were the Rev. Richard G. Hartley, M.A. (1864–1870), who wrote some of the earliest and best of the metrical hymns in our collection; the Rev. Thos. Capsey, B.A. (1881–1886), who was a tutor of the College; the Rev. John T. Wesley (1875), who only lived six months after his arrival in the country; the Rev. T. G. Beveridge (1872–1877), who was drowned, with his wife and children, in the wreck of the S.S. *Cashmere,* on his return to England; and my son-in-law, the Rev. Percy Milledge (1901–1907), who laboured earnestly not only in his extensive country district, but also to extend the Gospel among the heathen Bézànozàno people to the east, contracting typhoid while taking, with his wife, an evangelistic journey among them.

The *Ladies* connected with the Madagascar Mission must



L.M.S. INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL AT ANTANÀNARÌVO

by no means be forgotten in these biographical sketches, especially those who have done invaluable service in educational work among Malagasy girls and women. Among those who commenced girls' schools were Miss Cameron, Mrs. Parrett and Mrs. Richardson. Miss Mary T. Bliss (1876–1895), during her nineteen years' service, carried on with great zeal the Girls' Central School in the capital. With her was associated for several years Miss Edith Craven (1883–1922), who, after retiring from active work in that school, carried on for a long time a girls' hostel for about thirty girls, daughters of native evangelists and pastors in distant places. Miss Craven gave thirty-nine years of devoted service to Madagascar, so that she was for long the *doyenne* of the Imèrina Mission. With these two ladies also worked for several years Miss Mary A. Sibree (Mrs. Milledge), and Miss Lillian Briggs (Mrs. A. Currie); and it is not easy to estimate the enlightenment and uplifting, and the gracious influences which have resulted from the efforts of all these Christian women upon those who became the wives and mothers of the Malagasy of the Capital and the central province.

But it should never be forgotten that there are a large number of true missionaries in every foreign field whose names are not frequently mentioned in reports, but who are nevertheless doing most valuable service in a quiet, unobtrusive fashion, and these are *the Wives of the Missionaries.* Notwithstanding home and family claims, numbers of these ladies have been and still are the leaders in all work among the women and children in the Sunday Schools and day schools, Dorcas societies, Christian Endeavour meetings, and house visitation, etc., and to many of them their husbands may well say: "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all!" This is the way in which one Madagascar missionary describes his wife's work:

"On Monday and Friday mornings she exercises a general supervision of the children's sewing. On Wednesday morning the women of the surrounding churches come for a Bible-class and sewing or fancy work. On Thursday morning the women of the station church do the same. On Friday afternoon a few young women meet for helpful conversation and needlework, and on many other afternoons some who are learning to read come for lessons. On Sunday, in addition to playing the harmonium, my wife superintends the Sunday School and teaches the adult class of men and women. On the first Monday of every alternate month she undertakes the very fatiguing task of conducting a *viva voce* examination of the eight Sunday Schools of the neighbourhood in the lessons they have been studying. At the last examination 293 were present. In addition to all this, the superintendence of the Boys' Home devolves upon her; and owing to the chronic muddle in which the church accounts have been kept, my wife has undertaken the responsibility of keeping them also. Last July we spent a fortnight together in traversing the district to its most northern limit, during which time my wife spoke about Bible pictures on twenty-one occasions, and became acquainted with eighteen churches."

Much the same testimony as that just given might be added about almost every missionary's wife ever stationed in Madagascar.

Industrial Mission Work.—In all parts of the world where modern missionary enterprise has been undertaken, the preaching of the Gospel has been accompanied by civilizing influences, especially among uncultured peoples. The building by John Williams with his own hands his missionary ship, the "Messenger of Peace," and his story of "the talking chip," are among the romances of missionary annals; and evangelistic efforts in Madagascar have been accompanied from its commencement with industrial teaching.

Within a year or two after Mr. Jones had begun work in Antanànarìvo, several artisan missionaries were sent to Madagascar; one of these was a blacksmith, another a carpenter, another a weaver, another a tanner and leather-dresser, and another a printer, and others to replace those who died from fever, were sent during the following years up to 1828. The presence of these Christian men did much to gain the good-will of the king and the people generally towards European missionaries and their work, and, as will be presently shown, to ensure its continuance for some time longer than would have otherwise been the case.

Among the artisan missionaries was Mr. James Cameron, who, although coming out a carpenter, was a man of considerable intelligence and ability, and became well acquainted with chemistry, with something of astronomy, and was proficient also in surveying and engineering. About the year 1832 the heathen Queen Rànavàlona I had become very indignant at the influence the Gospel was exerting over considerable numbers of her people, and had almost determined to send away the missionaries, and to do her utmost to prevent her subjects from following any longer the new religion they had taught. But still she remembered how many useful things they had introduced into Madagascar, and possibly therefore there was something else they could teach the Malagasy to do. So one day she sent two of her officers to ask the missionaries the question, and to say, " You have taught my people many useful arts, for which I thank you, but now, is there anything else you can teach them ? For instance, can you teach my people how to make soap ? "

This was an art none of the missionaries had any experience of, and they were rather nonplussed ; but they turned to Mr. Cameron and asked him if he could help them in the matter. With Scotch caution he replied : " Let the officers come again in a week and I will see what I can do." After consulting some hand-books he had, he got suet and fat from the butchers in the market, prepared alkali from certain plants, and set to work, and, after some experiments, succeeded in producing two small bars of tolerably white and serviceable soap. At the appointed day the officers came again and took with them the soap for her Majesty to see. She was delighted with the result, and immediately entered into a contract with Mr. Cameron to erect workshops, and to teach a number of youths the art and mystery of soap-making.

And so the missionaries were not disturbed in their labours for about three years longer. During that period their work was greatly consolidated and strengthened ; a revival took place in the congregations already gathered together ; the translation of the whole Bible was completed and printed at their press, as was also the English-Malagasy and Malagasy-English Dictionary and many other books ;

many hundreds more of children were instructed in their schools; in a word, the native church would have been left in a far less prepared condition to withstand the storm of opposition and persecution which soon burst upon it, but for the additional years of teaching gained by the manufacture of those two little bars of soap! May we not regard it as an illustration of the way in which the "mean things of the world" are sometimes used by God to further His gracious purposes to mankind?

Mr. Cameron, in a paper of reminiscences of the early mission, claimed for that little band of Christian artisans, of which he himself was the most accomplished member, that (1) They greatly improved the manufacture of iron-work, employing it in the making of machinery and various tools. (2) They introduced the art of tanning and dressing hides to produce good leather, and with it, the manufacture of boots and shoes and other useful articles. (3) They taught improved methods of carpentry and joinery work. (4) They made bricks and tiles, and discovered slates, and stone for use as grindstones. (5) They discovered lime-stone, and taught the methods of burning it for mortar. (6) They discovered also plants to supply potash and soda, and also manufactured various chemicals used in different arts, and in medicine, as well as a mineral from which sulphur could be extracted. These three or four last items were due to Mr. Cameron chiefly or solely; and he also constructed water-mills for the Government and a large reservoir, and brought water for the same from a distance of some miles. It will be seen therefore that the Malagasy owe not a little of their early advance in civilization to members of the first Christian mission to their country.

On joining the re-established mission in 1863, Mr. Cameron built a handsome timber residence for Queen Rasohèrina, and designed and superintended the construction of the three-storied stone verandahs which surround the ancient wooden palace, on the summit of the Capital, as well as the towers at the angles of the same building. This one is the loftiest of the group of royal structures, and is the most prominent object in every view of Antanànarìvo, either far or near.

Mr. Cameron and Mr. Pool taught again the almost forgotten art of burning bricks and tiles, as well as the cheaper method of building with sun-dried bricks. And both these gentlemen built palaces for the Queen, and houses for the leading members of the Government, so that a great impetus was given to the arts of construction. It may be truly said that they found Antanànarìvo a town of wooden and rush houses, but they left it largely a city of stone and brick buildings. It is difficult to estimate the good which all this work did for the material advancement of the Malagasy, not the least benefit being the substitution of paid labour for unpaid and forced government and feudal service. For the first time (after the Memorial Churches were commenced), the Malagasy began to understand that an honest day's work deserved an honest day's pay.

Since the French occupation of Madagascar in 1895, the Boys' High School of the L.M.S. (in common with those of the Friends and the Lutheran missions) has had classes for industrial training; and here again high-class work has been produced by the boys instructed in this department, in accordance with the programme of the French educational authorities. The ability of the Malagasy in manual work has again been fully proved. It is only by having industrial and normal sections attached to our educational work that the law permits us to retain pupils over fourteen years of age. But the dislike of French officials to mission work has been shown by the fact that the Government has made it practically impossible for youths over twelve, if they attend a Christian school, to qualify for any higher posts, such as doctors, official school teachers, the civil service, or even from competing for entrance into the technical, commercial, and administrative schools. This is French interpretation of "religious liberty" and equality for all varieties of belief. If industrial work is kept strictly within its proper sphere, and used as a means to far higher ends, it may be made a very valuable auxiliary to spiritual work. This has always been the case in the history of our Madagascar mission.

It should not be forgotten also that while boys and men in Madagascar have been chiefly benefited by industrial teaching, the other sex has not been overlooked. The teaching of lace-making by two missionary ladies, by Mrs.

Wills in Imèrina, and Mrs. A. S. Huckett in Bétsiléo, has provided a light employment for a large number of women and girls in the central provinces. This has now become an important industry, and considerable quantities of beautiful lace, resembling that of Honiton and Malta, are exported to France and to this and other countries. More recently, the making of various articles in raffia, aloe-fibre, hemp, and other vegetable materials has also been introduced; and the making of fibre hats, resembling those called "panamà," has become a very important industry.

Medical Mission Work.—"Healing the sick," as well as preaching "the Kingdom of God," has for long been recognized as an indispensable part of missionary enterprise; and accordingly one of the first six messengers of the London Missionary Society to recommence work in Madagascar was a fully qualified doctor and surgeon, Dr. Andrew Davidson (1862–1876), who, during his fourteen years' service, did a great deal for the alleviation of suffering and the cure of disease among the Malagasy. Very soon after he began work he performed a successful operation on an old woman who had for some time been blind, and the report of the wonderful skill of the new doctor caused much talk throughout the city. A few days afterwards Dr. Davidson heard a commotion outside his house, and on going out he found a long palanquin covered with a sheet, under which was the body of a dead man. The friends had brought the corpse, and they said: "You can give sight to the blind; surely you can also raise the dead!" He built a hospital and dispensary; he trained a number of native doctors, in conjunction with Dr. Borchgrevink, of the Norwegian mission, and also nurses for the sick; by introducing vaccination he greatly reduced the ravages of smallpox, which, to large numbers of the Malagasy, was formerly very fatal; and he wrote valuable books on "Diseases and their Cure" (pp. 692), "Therapeutics, or the Action of Medicine" (pp. 228), a Pharmacopœia, and smaller books, all, of course, in the native language. Interesting papers of his also appeared in English medical journals on "The Malagasy Poison Ordeal of *Tangèna*"; on "Tubercular Leprosy in Madagascar," and on "Choreomania," as seen in Madagascar. But Dr. Davidson was ill-requited by the native Government for his invaluable services to the country and the people, and he left the island in 1876, being soon appointed to an important position in Mauritius, where he remained for several years. Returning to Europe, he became Professor of Tropical Diseases in the University of Edinburgh, and wrote a large book, in two volumes, entitled *Geographical Pathology* (1892). Dr. Davidson finished his useful and honourable life at Ilkley in the year 1918.

Medical work was continued at Antanànarìvo by Drs. W. Mackie, J. D. Allen, J. T. Fox, S. B. Fenn, Wm. Wilson and C. F. A. Moss ; a much larger hospital outside the Capital having been built and opened in 1891, giving accommodation, together with a smaller contagious diseases hospital, for ninety-two beds, and treating about a thousand in-patients every year. The story of the taking by the French Government of this hospital has been already given in Chapter XV. Since the island became a colony of France, no doctor can practise in Madagascar who has not a French diploma, but Dr. Moss, on account of the service he had long rendered to the country, was allowed to continue to practise, and has done so up to the present time, receiving patients in a dwelling-house at Antanànarìvo adapted for use as a hospital; and, more recently, recommencing medical work among the Sihànaka people.

The same favour was extended to Dr. Geo. H. Peake (1893–1909), who, for sixteen years, carried on a medical mission in the L.M.S. Hospital at Fìanàrantsòa, the Bétsiléo capital. The medical work done for a long time in the same province by the Rev. J. Pearse has been already mentioned in this chapter. A small asylum for lepers was carried on for many years at Fìanàrantsòa by Mrs. A. S. Huckett, of the L.M.S. mission.

For nine years a medical mission was carried on at Imèrìmandròso, a large town in the Antsihànaka province, by Dr. James G. Mackay (1886–1895). But a disastrous fire destroyed almost the whole mission property, including the hospital, and the change in Government coming soon afterwards prevented its being rebuilt, so that medical mission work there had to be given up.

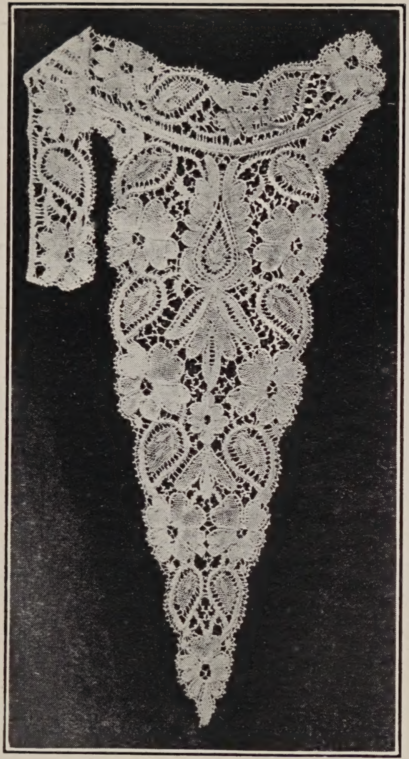
Perhaps it is hardly necessary to say that in Madagascar, as in all mission medical work, the healing of bodily disease is always attempted together with effort to do spiritual good and to lead the sick who come for help to the Physician of Souls. And in Madagascar it has not been without the happiest results in many instances. Dr. Moss, who was in charge of the L.M.S. and F.F.M.A. Hospital at Antanànarìvo for thirty years, says in one of his reports :—

" We had, two or three years ago, a patient, a woman, who came up in a sad condition, and was cured by operation. She, on her return, showed herself a changed character, and was cured body and soul, for they referred to her afterwards as being a great help to the little church and a power for good in her neighbourhood.

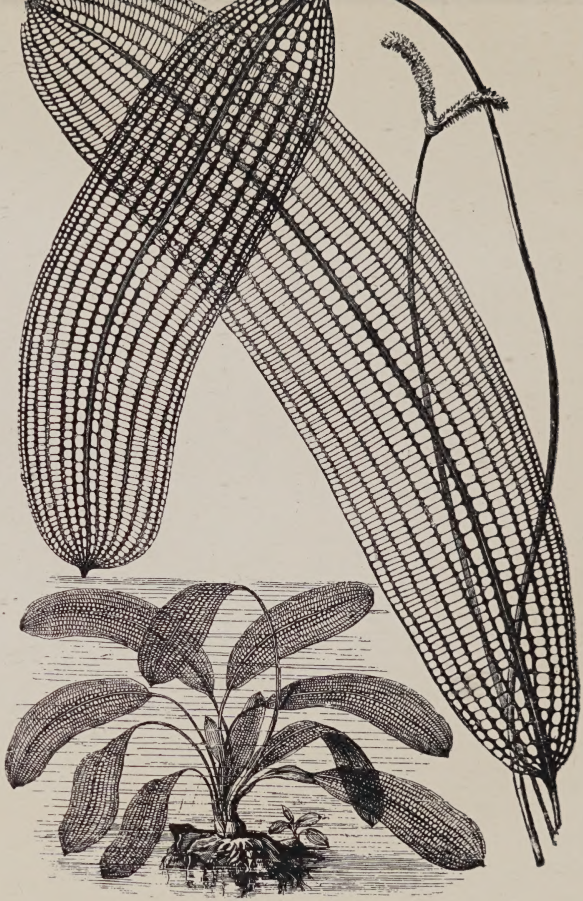
" Opportunity comes to the medical mission to help in this way people from all over the island, and occasionally one after the other the patients name some distant part as their homes. From time to time there come Sàkalàva from the west and north, Bétsimisàraka from the east coast, Sihànaka from their province, Bétsiléo from the south ; and these folks are not always Malagasy either, for we have had Indians from either coast, and Chinese from the central provinces as well. In this way the influence which it is possible to exert is spread broadcast, and a cure accomplished in Tananarive may effect a beneficial change in some far-off degraded spot, where the uplifting power of the good news has had small chance to penetrate."

So that although many who are healed in body may not receive the highest spiritual blessing, a strong impression is made upon them and upon native society generally, of the merciful and kindly spirit of the Gospel, which has led Christian doctors to come and give years of arduous toil to benefit their fellow-creatures, and do all in their power to relieve their sufferings and to restore the sick to health.

In concluding this chapter, largely consisting, as will have been seen, of personal reminiscences, I have confined myself almost exclusively to those with whom I had the happiness of working in Madagascar within the first twenty-five to thirty years of the recommencement of the mission. Of my colleagues for twenty-three years in College and other work, the Rev. James Sharman, and not less Mrs. Sharman, I have already spoken in connection with the



EXAMPLE OF MALAGASY LACE



LACE-LEAF PLANT

College in Chapter VI. And of those who, during the last twenty years or so, have joined the mission staff in Imèrina, I have no doubt that they will worthily carry on the traditions of those who have preceded them. Neither have I ventured to give pen pictures of my honoured brethren in the Bétsiléo province, who have done a great work for the southern central part of Madagascar; for of course I have not had the close personal relations with them that I enjoyed with my brethren in Imèrina. Of Mr. George A. Shaw, long connected with the Bétsiléo, the south-east coast, and the Tamatave missions, something has been said in Chapter XV.

But I cannot refrain from just mentioning some other fellow-workers of other missions, with whom we had many years' close association in common work. Among the Friends were Joseph S. Sewell, wise and judicious leader; and Louis and Sarah Street, American Friends; Helen Gilpin, known among us as "Aunt Helen"; Henry E. Clark, warm-hearted and earnest preacher (I once told a meeting of Friends at Devonshire House that he ought to have been a Primitive Methodist!), and writer of many valuable books; William Johnson, architect and artist, and his gentle wife, both, alas! cruelly murdered; John Sims, able preacher and writer and College tutor; H. F. Standing, D.Sc., scientist and genial man of many-sided ability, and Dr. William Wilson, "beloved physician"—these and others still living were closely united with those of us of the L.M.S.

Among the Norwegian missionaries there were also several who were very intimate friends; the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Borchgrevink, the doctor being for many years, nearly fifty, the virtual bishop of their mission; the Rev. L. Dahle, a most learned philologist and scholar; Miss V. Anderson, sweet singer and gifted teacher; the Rev. T. G. Rosaas and his wife, and the Rev. T. Rustad and his wife, all of them most gracious and hospitable of hosts, into whose houses we were always received with brotherly kindness.

With several of the French missionaries we were intimate, although with those who did not speak English, the difference of language put some little barrier between us. But with the pioneer missionaries, Messrs. Langa and

Krüger, and with Messrs. Boegner and Bianquis and Mme. Bianquis, we formed warm friendships, as well as with several others.

Lastly, notwithstanding ecclesiastical differences, we had very happy intercourse with several members of the Anglican mission, especially with the Rev. J. F. Radley, B.A., and his wife, Archdeacon Kestell-Cornish [1] and his wife, Archdeacon MacMahon and his wife, and with Bishop King [2] and his sister, Miss King. And one result of the Great War was to bring together more closely than ever before the missionaries of all the different societies labouring in Madagascar; our weekly prayer-meetings, formerly almost entirely confined to members of the L.M.S. and Friends' missions, were joined in by the Bishop and others of the Anglican mission, they taking their turn with us on every Friday evening, and offering extempore prayer as we did ourselves. May that united feeling never cease, but grow stronger and deeper with the advancing years!

[1] Now Bishop Kestell-Cornish.

[2] Now Secretary of the S.P.G.

CHAPTER XVIII

MY EXPERIENCES AS A MISSIONARY DEPUTATION

As I have had, through God's goodness, the rare privilege of spending nearly sixty years doing missionary work in, and in connection with, Madagascar, and as I have during several furloughs at home spoken more than two thousand seven hundred times, a few personal experiences of deputation work may not be without some interest to the readers of this book.

It is well known to the members and adherents of the different Protestant churches, both in Great Britain and in other countries, that for a long time past it has been the custom for the agents of the various missionary societies with which those churches are connected, to be employed for a large portion of the time they are at home on furlough on "deputation" work, so that they are constantly travelling about in all directions to preach on the Sundays, and to speak at weekday meetings. This, although often a laborious and fatiguing duty, is, I am sure, a very necessary one, if the interest of the home churches is to be sustained in the work abroad. It cannot be expected that people at home will for long continue to give their money and offer their prayers for their representatives in the foreign field unless they are frequently informed as to how that money is spent, and how those prayers are being answered.

It is, of course, most desirable that British Christians should receive frequent stimulus and encouragement from their own ministers to carry on God's work abroad, but I am quite sure that personal testimony from those who have been labouring in heathen countries is indispensable if their zeal is to be maintained and their interest kept strong and intelligent. The common phrase is, "We want a live missionary," one who can say with confidence, "I speak that which I know, and testify that which I have seen." It may be quite true to say that missionary interest in Christian people should be kept up by the merits of the work, and its imperative call to all who would obey their Lord's last command to His disciples; but human nature being what it is, the personal experience of those who have laboured in the foreign field is worth more than all the abstract arguments that can be adduced to enforce Christian duty.

It was necessary and desirable in apostolic times for Paul and Barnabas, on returning from their missionary work in Asia Minor, to "gather the church at Antioch together, and rehearse to them all that God had done by them, and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles" (Acts xiv. 25); and it is equally necessary for us *now* to hear what our missionaries can tell us how God has been with *them*, and of the openings for the Gospel in heathen lands.

As I look back on my long experience of deputation work, what a variety of places have I not spoken in! Great city churches like Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, and Union Chapel, Islington, and Carr's Lane, Birmingham, and humble village chapels and "tin tabernacles," modern Gothic churches and quaint old brick meeting-houses; in gardens and drawing-rooms; at Sunday services, Sunday School gatherings, public meetings large and small, meetings of Christian Endeavourers and of ladies, missionary exhibitions and lantern lectures, breakfast parties and tea-meetings, and others too numerous to speak of in detail.

But this deputation work is often by no means an easy task, and in my earlier furloughs I have clear recollections of three weeks' or a month's meetings almost every day, the services on a Sunday being almost invariably three in number, including an address to the Sunday School in the afternoon, and in later years a sermonette to children during the morning service. A meeting at which one had to be the chief speaker had generally to be addressed on four and often five evenings during the week, with now and then a breakfast party and an afternoon meeting thrown in as a variety; and frequently one is asked to meet the chief workers in the local committee on the Saturday evening on getting to a new centre. (This, by the way, is a very valuable and useful occasion for getting into touch with the most earnest and missionary-minded of the people.)

And the speaking at meetings is not the most laborious part of the work ; it is the constant moving about from one place to another, sleeping in a different bed night after night, packing and unpacking one's belongings, and often having to carry your heavy Gladstone bag a mile or two, as well as one's other things and a parcel of " curios " or pictures for illustrating one's addresses. How often have I laboured with a big roll-map of Madagascar in addition to my other *impedimenta* ! Then there is the incessant changing of one's lodgings day after day, and especially the constant talking and making fresh acquaintance with one's host or hostess, and the answering of such questions as, " What sort of a place is Madagascar ? " and " What kind of people are the Malagasy ? " often with the addition, " I suppose they are black ? " But, good folks, how could one blame them ? It was probably their one opportunity during the year to get first-hand information about foreign mission work, and I hope I tried to interest them by full replies to their queries.

I have, happily, never had the experience some of my brethren have gone through, of being put into a damp bed, with very serious consequences to health, but I have now and then had rather rough quarters. In South Wales I was once put into a very damp bedroom, the walls reeking with moisture, so that I felt some doubt about remaining there. Only twice or thrice have I had to go to a boarding-house or an hotel.

But, after all, such incidents were very exceptional ; and now, recalling the great number of homes into which I have been received as an honoured guest, I can truly say that the kindness shown everywhere, the bountiful hospitality, the care for one's comfort, and the desire to help me in every way have been wonderful ; and I have often felt utterly unworthy of the attention shown to me by all sorts of people, high and low, rich and poor, all over the country. I have often felt I have been in the houses of " the excellent of the earth," and I have been humiliated at the respect shown to me, yet often feeling to have been " esteemed very highly in love for my work's sake." It has been a great privilege to meet everywhere men and women who were devoted servants of our Master; and if I have brought any help and stimulus to others, I have often received far more blessing myself.

Feeling, then, in this way about deputation work, I have never been able to respond to the commiseration kindly meant by some who think that missionaries are hardly treated when we come home on furlough. For my own part, I would not on any account have missed the experiences of deputation visits, for it is surely a great advantage to many missionaries who, in their younger days and during College time may have had little acquaintance with their own country, to be able to see, as a deputation, some of the most beautiful and historic places of this fair England of ours. It is a liberal education thus to travel about and, as in my own case, to enjoy the charms of the English Lake district or the Highlands of Scotland, or the Welsh mountain region. I was able in this way to visit every one of our English cathedrals, some of them many times; to see ancient castles like Warwick and Arundel, Kenilworth and Raglan and Pembroke, to see ancient abbeys like Fountains and Bolton, Netley and Tintern; and to visit historic cities like York and Chester and Canterbury, and historic places like Stratford-on-Avon and Lichfield, and Elston and Olney, with the memories of Shakespeare and Samuel Johnson, of John Bunyan and William Cowper, as well as many another noteworthy spot.

And not only does deputation work give one opportunities of seeing famous *places*, but also sometimes of being the guests of famous *men*. I felt it no small honour to be in the house of people like the late Sir Edward Baines, of Leeds, the late Sir James Murray, of *Dictionary* fame, the late Dr. Robertson Smith, the scholar and critic, the Crossleys of Halifax, and others. At one house my host was the chief authority on English mosses; at another he was a learned botanist in sedges and water-plants, with an herbarium filling every room of a large house; at another, I was entertained by a gifted chemist and authority on scientific agriculture; and so on, with others of my hosts, perhaps less known to fame, but people of literary and scientific and artistic attainments, to say nothing of Christian graces ; so that often it was a benediction to be under their roofs, and friendships have been formed which have lasted for years after my brief visit. No, we missionaries have no reason to complain, but great reason to be thankful for the way in which deputation work brings us in contact sometimes with eminent persons, and invariably with those who are good people, who sympathize fully with our work, and are delighted to hear all we can tell them about it.

It is also a great pleasure connected with this work to meet with brother missionaries from other parts of the world, and to hear about their fields of labour. What an honour I felt it to speak on the same platform with the venerable Dr. Robert Moffat, with Dr. Griffith John, with Dr. Duff, of India, with Dr. W. G. Lawes, of Savage Island and New Guinea, and with many another, whose names are too numerous to record here. As I look through my old registers of services, I can count up a score or two names of men whose work may not be as well known as that of those just mentioned, but who were or are honoured and beloved in many parts of the world.

There is also another great advantage arising from deputation work. Although we are not allowed—and very properly so—unless express permission is given by the Directors, to make any *public* appeal for help in our own special work, there is no difficulty in our mentioning it to those with whom we stay or meet in the course of our duties ; and in innumerable cases interest is excited in what we are personally engaged in doing, and help is given for many years in succession to support a teacher, or an evangelist, or a pastor, or to educate a promising boy or girl in a school ; or to build a chapel, or a school-house, or a hospital, and so to materially help the work done at our own station, and lighten the burden on the funds of the Society. And thus numbers of good people at home come to take special interest in a particular missionary and his station, especially if that missionary is wise and writes every year to give some account of his doings, or of their *protégé*, and especially if that *protégé* writes himself to the home church. There are probably not many missionaries of a few years' standing who have not been helped in this way ; such help would never have been given him but for his doing deputation work at that particular place.

When speaking of eminent people one has met while thus serving the mission cause, it has been a peculiar pleasure to me to have had opportunities of not only seeing but hearing famous preachers and writers. One Sunday afternoon I had to speak at Chelsea, and on returning home had to pass Westminster Abbey. I thought I might as well stop there for the evening service, and who should be the preacher there but Dr. Benjamin Jowett, of Oxford, and his subject was "Richard Baxter" and his contribution to theology—a great Nonconformist the subject of a sermon in an Anglican Cathedral! It was another illustration of that breadth of view that has characterized the Abbey authorities ever since the days of Dean Stanley. The mention of that honoured name recalls to me the pleasure of seeing and hearing the beloved Dean at a service one winter morning. His *Sinai and Palestine*, his *Lectures on the Jewish and the Eastern Churches*, his *Historical Memorials of Canterbury*, etc., had long been familiar to me and prized by me, and it afterwards gave them additional charm as I recalled the beautiful and thoughtful face of their author. On another Sunday evening I went into St. Paul's and found that it was St. Paul's Day; there were special hymns, and for the anthem there were selections from the Oratorio of St. Paul, while the preacher was, most appropriately, Dean Howson, who gave us a long but masterly sermon in which he described the influence of the great apostle on Christian doctrine and theology. Here, again, *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul* seemed still more interesting from having seen and heard one of its authors. Again, hearing Bishop Lightfoot one afternoon in the same pulpit, and, later on, seeing Bishop Westcott in Peterborough Cathedral, gave fresh interest to the commentaries of the first-named of those great scholars and theologians on several of the Epistles, and to many books of the second one, all of which had been studied while in my own College course, and afterwards used constantly in teaching my own students at our College in Antananarìvo. How often have I not received help from those two great theologians of the Church of England.

I need hardly mention the names of great Nonconformist

THE AUTHOR AND HIS WIFE

preachers also with whom deputation work brought one more or less into contact: Spurgeon and Dale and Morley Punshon, Enoch Mellor and William Pulsford and Mark Guy Pearse, Drs. Joseph Parker and Jowett and Horton, and many another pulpit orator.

To speak, however, of deputation work itself and the different ways of carrying it on. In the early times of my first furlough, I began by preaching a sermon on Sundays that was of course missionary in aim; but I soon found that that was *not* the best plan for a missionary to follow. The exposition of the duty of Christian people to send the Gospel to the heathen, and its enforcement upon their conscience and their sympathy, may probably be better done by their own ministers. And I saw that facts and incidents and personal experience of the *results* of one's work, as well as that of one's fellow-workers, was far more suitable to arouse interest, provided that these were put in a telling and picturesque fashion. So I afterwards contented myself with taking a suitable text, giving a very brief exposition of it, and then illustrating it by a sketch of the history of one's field, and by giving incidents showing the power of the Gospel in individual lives, and in the national life of the people among whom one has lived.

Almost invariably a Sunday School address comes in the afternoon; and I have always felt this to be a most necessary part of one's duty, to arouse and sustain the children's interest in missionary work, and to show them that they have an important "share in the concern." For many years I have carried about with me a parcel of a dozen pictures on cloth, prepared at one of our mission presses in Antanànarìvo, showing the customs of the Malagasy, their dress and appearance, their churches, a village school examination, etc., and so helping the children to understand our work by means of the eye as well as the ear. Some of the native "charms" and objects of superstitious belief are also useful. In earlier times I often sang a Malagasy hymn; in later years I often repeat one of our beautiful metrical hymns, or perhaps the Lord's Prayer, in Malagasy, remembering how, as a boy, I liked to hear a missionary say something in a foreign language, and I believe children are now equally interested in hearing such strange sounds.

For weekday meetings, of course, a greater latitude is allowable and desirable, and one may say things of an amusing character which are not fitting in a pulpit. And one's subject will vary considerably according to the occasion and the audience. One can give details in a small gathering of earnest folks and Christian workers which would be unsuitable in a great meeting like those I have addressed in Exeter Hall, or Birmingham Town Hall, or Colston Hall in Bristol. Needless to say that tact and good judgment are most desirable everywhere. I have heard of a missionary who had occupied the time of a meeting in describing how he cultivated the garden at their station, and what vegetables he raised; and of another giving unpleasant details of the prevalent diseases in his district, etc.; and it is not strange that the Mission House has been requested not to send such a deputation another year.

Early in my deputation work, a missionary who had had much longer experience of it than myself, said: "You are generally safe in assuming that nine-tenths of your audience know hardly anything about your field of labour, and so whatever you tell them will be new to almost all of them." Striking incidents vividly told, a touch of humour if you like, the pathetic as well as the serious aspects of one's work, and also picturesque and life-like historical sketches, personal experiences, grave and gay—these are sure to evoke sympathy as well as practical help and prayer for one's self and one's fellow-workers, and for the people we work among. An earnest appeal for the fulfilment of our Lord's last command, and its continual obligation upon the Church, may well form a conclusion to our addresses. And any missionary address, although instructive and perhaps amusing, but which does not quicken the conscience of the audience, and arouse them to increased faith and effort for the extension of the Kingdom of God, has surely missed its proper end and aim.

With regard to meetings, I may remark that in my time, especially during my earlier furloughs, I have "suffered many things" of chairmen. I have had to do with good men who have entirely disregarded what has been described as a chairman's duty, viz. "to take the chair and to *keep in* the chair," and who have treated the audience to an elaborate essay of half an hour's duration on the duty of Christians to evangelize the world. At other meetings the chairman, after his own fairly lengthy address, has called upon half a dozen other people to speak first, the superintendent of the Sunday School, the secretary of the Christian Endeavour Society, the city or town missionary, neighbouring ministers, and others, so that the usual time for closing was fast approaching before the unfortunate deputation has had a chance of speaking at all! I heard of one of my brethren being treated in this fashion, and so it was just nine o'clock when the chairman said: "I will now call upon Mr. So-and-So to give us his address." My brother got up and said: "My friends, my 'address' is No. 10, in such-and-such a street, and I wish you all good-night!"

I have never done quite like that, but at a Lancashire town I was once relegated to about five minutes before nine o'clock. Now I had been told beforehand that Lancashire people would not stay beyond nine! So I rose and said that I had understood that this was a *missionary* meeting, and that I had come from a country three or four thousand miles away to tell them of the wonderful work of God there; that it was simply impossible to do this in five minutes, and I should not attempt it; if the audience was prepared to give me half an hour I would speak, but if the majority kept going away all through that time I should sit down at once. It was therefore agreed that I should have full thirty minutes, and I accordingly spoke for that time, and I hope to the people's interest and profit, and not a soul stirred!

At other meetings I have been told, "Mr. S. should have told you this," or "Mr. S. has omitted to say that," etc. Hardly less annoying is the chairman who has posted himself up just before the meeting with a lot of facts from the *Annual Report*, and who gives the audience, before you get up, some of the very points about your own field which you had intended to make prominent. At a town in Lancashire the chairman thought it proper to make a serious attack upon the London Missionary Society, making a great point of what they did, or omitted to do, on a certain group of islands. On going into the subject—for I could not allow my own Society to be thus publicly blamed without a protest from me—it turned out that the L.M.S. had not then, or at any previous time, any missionary in that particular group! But I am bound to say that of late years there has been much improvement on all such points as those just mentioned, and I have very seldom had reason to complain of being cramped by want of time for speaking.

Among the minor difficulties of deputation work is that of imperfect information as to where to go on arriving at a railway station. For example, before going to a meeting at Shanklin (Isle of Wight) from Sandown, I had sent to me the name of a gentleman at such and such a house as inviting me to take a cup of tea before the meeting, but no name of road or street or locality. Soon after leaving the station I passed the chapel at which I was to speak and saw my name on a poster outside, so I knew where the meeting was to be held; but find the house I could not, as I had no clue to its whereabouts; nor could I find policeman or postman to help me. So after about an hour's fruitless and fatiguing search, I had to give it up and return to the station for the very meagre fare its refreshment room provided, reminding me of that supplied at "Mugby Junction." Such indefinite information is still more annoying in an evening, or on a winter night, when it is often very difficult to find out numbers on doors or gates. But, after all, these are very exceptional experiences, and again I express my heartfelt obligations to unnumbered friends all over the country whose courtesy and kindness and considerate attention have been beyond words of mine to express my obligations to them.

As a rule, when the minister of the church at which we have to speak is himself in hearty sympathy with mission work, and when special prayer has been made beforehand about the meetings, and special interest excited about them, one finds that the congregation is ready to receive our message and is responsive to it. I have, however, met with exceptions to this rule. One cannot, perhaps, complain much if the minister is away on that missionary Sunday, either for his holiday or to take a supply somewhere else; but it certainly *is* encouraging to the deputation to find the minister at home that day and glad to help one in the conduct of the services. Occasionally one feels that little or no attempt has been made to interest the people in the meeting to render it successful. I *have* found that nothing has been said about it beforehand, no chairman arranged for, no one to play the organ for the singing, and so on; and the result has naturally been most disappointing and discouraging. "How *not* to do it" has apparently been the motto at that particular place. I remember a small Yorkshire town where I had myself to go and get bills printed, and call upon two or three ministers and ask them to attend and help us in the meeting, since the minister had gone away and done *nothing* for it!

On the other hand, where the annual missionary meeting is looked forward to as one of the most important events of the year, and when the missionary's coming is anticipated by earnest prayer for a blessing on his message, there cannot but be a successful service when he preaches and speaks. In my own family history there have been very sacred associations connected with the missionary anniversary time, and there should be such in many families and churches. The missionary call has often come as a personal call to surrender to Christ's claims and to offer a devoted life-service.

A very useful variety in the ordinary kind of missionary meeting is one which consists chiefly of replies to questions put by the chairman to the deputation. Sometimes these have been prepared beforehand, and others are often written on slips of paper at the time by any of the audience and handed to the chairman. Dr. Duthie, of Travancore, and I were once subjected to a close cross-examination of this kind by Dr. Dale at Birmingham, and I have had similar experiences in other places. Such meetings have, I believe, been very interesting to the audience, and have been very useful to the deputation in showing what people want to know, and in suggesting topics for speeches in the future. These questions have often surprised me by showing what mistaken ideas are sometimes entertained by many of our Christian people with regard to missionary work in general, and one's own field in particular. Thus I have been asked (not at a meeting, however) whether Madagascar was not somewhere in Russia (!), while a very intelligent lady inquired if it was not about as large as the Isle of Wight (!) [1]

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[1] Madagascar is just a thousand miles long, and is about four times the size of England and Wales.

On the other hand, I have also been sometimes much gratified by the knowledge of the field evinced by some questions, showing that that department of our work has been carefully studied.

It has been a great pleasure to me, as well as a bounden duty, to speak and preach frequently on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society. I feel, as a Madagascar missionary, that, together with all my brother missionaries, past and present, " I am debtor " to that great and honoured Society for the inestimable service it has rendered to our Madagascar mission, as it has done to all missionary societies. In taking my part in the revision of our Malagasy Scriptures, in carrying through the press during furloughs at home four editions of the Bible and several of the New Testament and the Gospels, I felt that I was a worker with and for the Bible Society. So it is always a peculiar satisfaction to me to describe the grand work it is doing throughout the world, and has done in Madagascar, and to advocate its claims on the help and sympathy of all Christian people.

It was for the Bible Society that I first addressed one of the great annual meetings in Exeter Hall, and subsequently spoke in the same great hall for the L.M.S. And here I may note that the Exeter Hall audience on both occasions, as well as at other times, always seemed to me a very unresponsive and unimpressionable one. For it *is* a stimulus and help to a speaker to hear some applause and some response to his efforts to interest and arouse them ; but that audience generally appeared to be too " proper " and too polite to applaud.

Here I may remark that of course my Bible Society speech had been carefully written out, and I had it in my pocket, while holding in my hand some small cards to refresh my memory in case it should fail me. While still speaking I felt that one of my points, in which there was something amusing, had better be omitted, as a little incongruous with my chief argument. On leaving the platform, one of the reporters asked if I could let him have any notes of my address, so I lent him my manuscript. Judge, therefore, of my surprise and amusement to see in the next monthly publication of the Bible Society the whole of the omitted paragraph of my speech, with the word "laughter" appended!

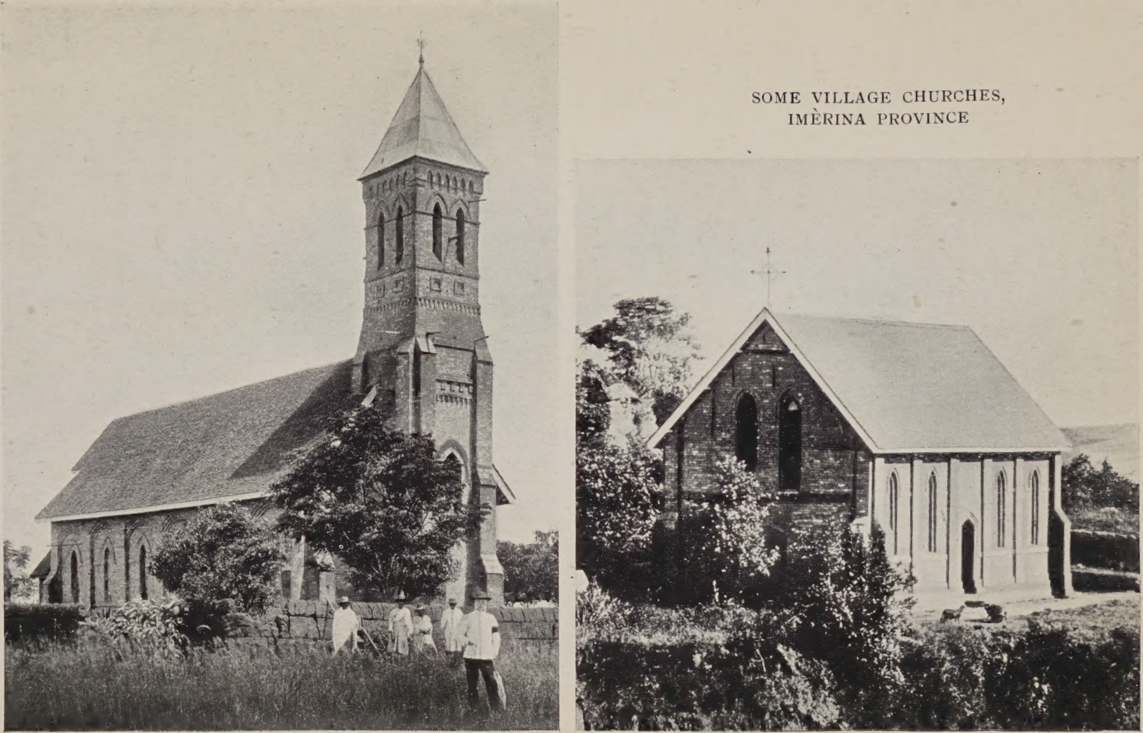
In a later furlough I had to speak at the annual meeting of the L.M.S. at Queen's Hall, and on rising to take my part before a large audience, I experienced for the first and only time what I suppose was a kind of "stage fright." My address had, of course, been carefully prepared and fully written out, and was well on my mind. But when I rose to speak, all at once my mind and memory appeared an utter blank, and I could not recall a word! It was a dreadful sensation, although I recovered myself directly, for I suppose it was but momentary, and I heard afterwards that no one noticed anything out of the ordinary. Still, it was for a brief time—which seemed to me a long time—an awful experience.

Speaking to children's gatherings has, of course, been a constant part of one's duties, and I have usually, I believe, managed to secure their interest and attention. The afternoon meeting of 3,000 children in Colston Hall, Bristol, used to be a specially formidable occasion, but one year both my colleague, Dr. W. G. Lawes, of New Guinea, and I managed to secure their ear. But on one or two occasions at other places I failed altogether. The first of these was at Cardiff; other speakers, including a young Welsh missionary from India, had already spoken; the children were getting tired and restless, and I was utterly unable to get hold of them, and soon gave it up as hopeless. Such failures, I hope, kept me more humble and less self-confident.

I will give here a deputation story perhaps familiar to some, but maybe new to others, which is as follows: A formerly well-known minister was asked to accompany a missionary during a week's meetings at several small towns round a large Midland town. At the first four of these the missionary spoke first and the minister followed him. But the latter grew rather tired of hearing his brother from abroad give practically the same speech on four occasions, so on the Friday he said to him, "Let us have a change this evening; let *me* speak first." "All right," said his friend, "let us do as you wish." So the popular preacher rose and gave the missionary's speech, which he remembered fairly well, having heard it four times, slyly thinking, "I have taken the wind out of your sails, my friend!" But to his surprise, when the missionary rose, he gave quite a different address! The minister said afterwards, "I thought I had you there, brother!" but he felt still more chagrined when his friend replied, "Oh, no; *my* speech which *you* gave them this evening, *I* gave here last year!" It was certainly a case of "the biter being bit."

I conclude these reminiscences by repeating that I believe deputation work at home is still quite necessary for the success of missionary work abroad, and that if wisely and carefully conducted it will conduce, as the motto of the "Society of Jesus" expresses it, *Ad majorem Dei gloriam,* "To the greater glory of God," and to the wider extension of His Kingdom in the world.

SOME VILLAGE CHURCHES,
IMÈRINA PROVINCE



AMBÒHITRÀRAHÀBA

AMBÀTOBÉ

CHAPTER XIX

MY WORK IN MADAGASCAR IN BOOKS AND BUILDINGS; CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS; HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

The first chapter of this book was " mostly autobiographical," and this last chapter must also revert to matters in which personal experiences will be again recalled. My life in Madagascar as architect of the Memorial Churches, as country missionary, as College principal and tutor, and as having charge of a large city church and its district, has been shown in several chapters; and in other parts of the book many personal reminiscences and experiences have been recorded. But there are some other aspects of my life during fifty-two years' acquaintance with the country and the people which may be noticed here a little more fully, in order to give completeness to my life story.

I have had the singular advantage of being called upon to do a rather large variety of missionary work. Three or four departments of it have been noticed in the preceding paragraph, but a little more may be said here of two other branches of work which I have to do, viz. Literary and Architectural.

The number of schools founded by the first missionaries to Madagascar soon produced a desire for knowledge and a taste for reading among hundreds of the young Malagasy; and amid the many demands on their time, especially the translation of the Bible and the compiling of a large dictionary of the language, the writing of hymns and the preparation of school-books, etc., they also translated several small books into the native language and printed a large number of tracts, which were circulated among the people.

A printing-press was among the things sent out with the first party of missionaries when the country was reopened to Christian teaching in 1862, and has not ceased ever since that date to produce every year still increasing numbers of books and pamphlets and periodicals. The Friends' Mission, the Norwegian Lutherans, and the Roman Catholics have also their own presses and provide literature for their adherents.

I have felt it an honour and a pleasure to take a humble part in writing books and various papers both in Malagasy *for* the people, and also in English *about* them and their country. And yet I often recall a remark made to me on the very day of my arrival in the Capital (October 13, 1863) by my revered friend, the Rev. W. Ellis. I was taken to visit him on the afternoon of that day, and after being welcomed to the mission he suddenly said, "Mr. Sibree, I hope you have not come out to Madagascar for the purpose of writing a book!" I was a little startled by this remark, for which I could see no reason, as I had certainly never up to that time appeared in print except in some schoolboy magazines. However, I assured my friend that I had *not* come out for that purpose, although I could not, of course, say what I might be led to do in the future. The remark struck me as curious, and I sometimes said to myself, "Does Mr. Ellis fear that I am going to infringe his patent, as *the* English writer on Madagascar?" He had already written two or three books about the country, very valuable and interesting ones, and also the article upon it in the eighth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and so was regarded as the chief authority on the subject. But whatever may have been Mr. Ellis's suspicions about me as a rival author, it *has* come to pass that I have written considerably more about the island and its people and mission work connected with it than even he accomplished.

I have thus written because I believed I had information on many subjects connected with the country and the people which had not been made known before or not fully known, and which were well worth recording; and I have certainly great reason for gratification at the way in which my efforts have been received. From a record kept of pamphlets, articles in magazines, and reviews, I see that these number about two hundred, the large proportion of them referring to

Madagascar, while I have also prepared the articles "Madagascar" for three editions of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and three editions of *Chambers's Encyclopædia.* I have also felt it right to frequently write to leading newspapers and make known from time to time the position of mission work in Madagascar, especially at critical periods of its history.

One of the most important literary ventures in which I was engaged during many years was the carrying on of a publication called *The Antanànarìvo Annual and Madagascar Magazine.* During the greater part of the time of its issue I had the valuable co-operation of my brother missionary, the Rev. R. Baron. This magazine was commenced by myself towards the end of 1875, and was continued for twenty-four years, being issued about Christmas-time each year. Each number contained 128 pages, and purported to be "A Record of Information on the Topography and Natural Productions of Madagascar, and the Customs, Traditions, Language, and Religious Beliefs of its People."

The numbers for every four years were paged consecutively and carefully indexed, so that they might form a good-sized volume; and it may be affirmed that the six volumes of the *Annual*, comprising over 3,000 pages in all, contain an amount of information about Madagascar and the Malagasy which cannot be found anywhere else. I was always on the look-out for material for its pages, and most of my brethren of the L.M.S. gave us valuable help by contributing articles, as did also missionaries of the Friends, the Anglican, and the Norwegian missions. Among the last-named, a very valuable series of papers on the Malagasy language was written by a learned philologist, the Rev. Lars Dahle, papers that are indispensable in studying the grammar of that tongue. The printing and whole "get-up" of this magazine was very creditable to our native printers; and as regards its contents, we have been gratified by the high terms of appreciation in which it has been spoken of by scientific and literary men in England, France, America and Germany; and I believe its six volumes will be increasingly valued as time goes on. I felt that it was well worth all the time and trouble—and it was not a little—that it cost me to collect material, to edit it with my colleague, to write papers, and to translate others, and to correct proofs (for Malagasy printers had to set up type in a language unknown to them), and every four years to index the volumes (my own special work). My good friend, M. Alfred Grandidier, the greatest authority on Madagascar, kindly gave me leave to translate anything from his *magnum opus*, or from his numerous articles in French about the country and the people, and I often availed myself of his generosity to enrich the pages of the *Annual.*

One of my hobbies ever since my boyhood has been the study of those noblest of our antiquities, our English cathedrals. During several Christmas vacations, notwithstanding a variety of other work which always had to be done, I managed to write a book on this subject, which was published three or four years before the Great War.[1]

Another hobby has for many years been the study of Natural History; and this resulted in the writing of a book published, rather unfortunately, just at the beginning of the Great War [2]; and also in a smaller work, intended primarily for young folks, but possibly not without interest for older people.[3]

But I also tried to do my share in writing in Malagasy, both books and for our periodicals. As already noticed in Chapter IV, in the year 1866 we began a magazine which we called *Tèny Sòa*, or "Good Words," and this has been carried on without any interruption from political changes, and issued every month up to the present time, so that in 1916 it attained its jubilee, and many were the letters of congratulation from old friends and former contributors. It is our chief means of communication as a mission with the widely scattered congregations in connection with the L.M.S., and has a large circulation. Although its chief aims are moral and religious, we have always had a good proportion of its pages devoted to giving information on all sorts of subjects; so that had any Malagasy preserved a complete set of *Tèny Sòa* from its commencement, he would possess a modest encyclopædia of knowledge of all kinds. Helps to preachers, by giving them outlines of sermons, has always been an important feature of the magazine, and in later years we have given in it outline lessons in three grades for Sunday School teachers. *Tèny Sòa* has, therefore, been a great means of helping and enlightening the Malagasy for many years past.

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[1] *Our English Cathedrals: their Architectural Beauties and Characteristics, and their Historical Associations*, with Map, Plans, and Illustrations. 2 vols., pp. 530. London: Francis Griffiths. 1911.

[2] *A Naturalist in Madagascar.* Maps and Illustrations. Pp. 320. London: Seeley, Service and Co. 1915.

[3] *Things Seen in Madagascar.* Map and Illustrations. Pp. 95. London: L.M.S., Livingstone Press. 1921.

I well remember how proud we all were of our first number, almost all the missionaries then in the island taking some part in its production. My contribution was an article on "The Steam Engine," with illustrations of a locomotive engine and the Primrose Hill tunnel; and a few years later, when editing a reprint of the earlier volumes, I was amused at my attempts to describe in Malagasy the mysteries of rods and cylinders, and cranks and axles, etc., in a language possessing hardly any technical terms; so I fear my readers would have a rather hazy impression of what a steam-engine was like! However, we all did our best, and the magazine was started; and I wrote many an article for it in subsequent years, also taking my turn in editing it.

A few years later we all felt the need of something more advanced than *Tèny Sòa,* especially for our intelligent young men and women, and a quarterly magazine was commenced which was called *Mpanòlo-tsaina,* or "The Counsellor," and in its 64 pages articles much fuller in matter, and treating of wider subjects, could be given. This quarterly has been greatly appreciated by our people, and for some years past the contents have been entirely written by Malagasy, the general editorship only being done by a missionary, and the press-editing falling to myself for several years. Many articles of great value as regards the language, ancient customs and national history have appeared in its pages.

One of the most important pieces of literary work that I was able to do was the editing of a Malagasy *Dictionary of the Bible,* a book of some 900 pages, double column, of which I wrote more than half the contents. This work was illustrated with woodcuts and maps, and has gone through two large editions. A third edition, largely re-written, is now being prepared.

Among my contributions to Malagasy literature were the following: *Lessons from the Gospel of Luke,* pp. 172, three editions (for preachers and teachers); *Zoology*, pp. 278, with 130 litho figures; *Ecclesia*: Church officers, sacraments, etc., pp. 146, two editions; *Why we are Protestants*, pp. 180, three editions; *The Four Gospels*, pp. 123, two editions; *Madagascar: Description and History of Country and People*, pp. 365; *Non-Christian Religions* (Buddhism, Confucianism, etc.), pp. 171, two editions; *The Pastor's Friend* (A Manual for Conduct of Public Worship), pp. 132, two editions; *A Handbook to the L.M.S. Mission*, pp. 64.

I do not, of course, ignore the valuable contributions to Malagasy literature made by my brethren, in the way of Commentaries, Theology, Church History, Science Handbooks, Dictionaries, etc., etc. Some of these have been already mentioned in Chapter XVII; I am here only noting down what I have been able to do myself. As Principal of the College, the proof-reading for reprinting all our class-books has also constantly fallen to me, as well as in the reprints of many other books, and this has necessarily taken a large amount of time and care.

During different furloughs in England I had the pleasure of press-editing four editions of the Malagasy Bible, a work which occupied most of two days every week for about eighteen months on each occasion; and I also carried through the Press in Madagascar two or three editions of the New Testament, of the Gospel of Luke, and of some Epistles. Proof-reading, although very laborious and, to many people, very distasteful, was a work I was always ready to undertake, while, to do this for any part of the Bible, I considered a privilege and honour.

Besides the literary work I have been able to accomplish, *Architectural Work*, especially during the last twenty years of my life in Madagascar, has also made considerable demands on my time. Having been missionary architect during my first stay in the island, it was also natural that my services in that line should have been frequently sought for afterwards. And so it has constantly happened that where a country congregation has been thinking of building a new church, and has come for their missionary's advice and help, he has frequently replied that they had "better go to Mr. Sibree for a design, as he knew all about such matters." And it has been a pleasure to me to help them in preparing a set of drawings ; and, if the village was not too distant a place, to set out the foundations for them, and look in as often as possible to see that the design was being carried out correctly.

It must also be remembered that very few Malagasy workmen are conversant with the mysteries of *scales*, half-inch, quarter-inch, and all the rest ; and so it was always necessary, in addition to making plans, elevations, and sections of a church, say to $\frac{3}{16}$-inch scale, and details to a larger scale, to make full-sized drawings of all woodwork or stone- or ironwork, where any carving or ornamentation was needed, so that these paper patterns could be laid upon the material, and from them the centres of arches and curves and cusping, etc., could be marked off accurately. All this, it will be evident, added materially to the time and trouble involved in making a set of drawings, and especially those for all church fittings and furniture. And I had no helper or articled pupil to assist me, or to make a tracing or a copy, or do any mere routine work such as inking in or colouring a drawing.

However, during my connection with Madagascar, and since it also, I managed to prepare designs for about fifty churches, not including the Memorial Churches ; most of these were, of course, in the province of Imèrina, some in Bétsiléo, some in Antsihànaka and still farther north, and one at Tamatave. I also sent drawings for a C.M.S. church at Hakodate, in Japan, others for a church in South Africa.

Besides designs for complete buildings, there were a number required for portions of churches, such as transepts, porches, etc. A few years ago there was quite a rage for building towers for churches, and I made designs for sixteen or seventeen of these, as well as for several bell-turrets. For galleries there were about a dozen asked for ; for pulpits, generally including platforms and railings, drawings were made for more than thirty ; for communion tables and lecterns, about two dozen drawings were supplied, as well as for several stone fonts, stalls, iron railings, etc. ; while wall decoration, reredoses, etc., needed nearly a score designs.

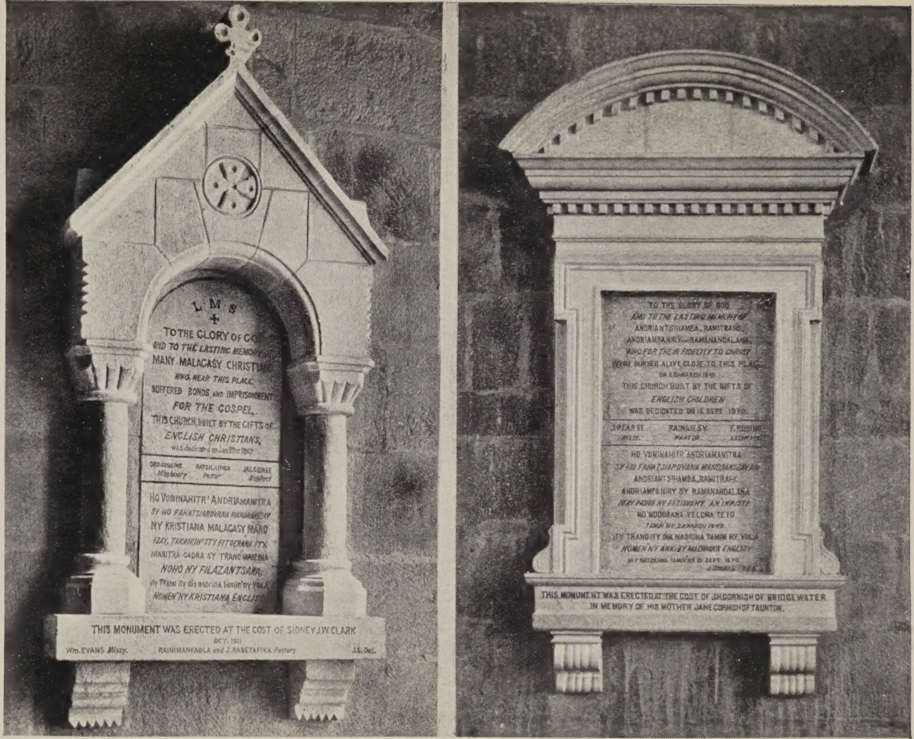
It was always a pleasure to me to help the missionaries of other societies ; so I designed all the furniture and fittings for the chief French Protestant church in the Capital, which required more than twenty sheets of drawings ; I also designed an ornamental wooden and panelled ceiling for the chancel of the Anglican Cathedral ; indeed, I may call myself " consulting architect " to the Protestant missions in the island (except the two extreme southerly ones), for I was called in at different times to advise them all with regard to their churches, schools and other buildings.

For our own and other societies I made designs for about twenty college and school buildings, the principal of these being for our Theological College, our Boys' High School, and large additions to the Friends' Boys' High School. For mission houses or manses, I made twenty designs ; and for hospitals, two at Fìanàrantsòa and one in Antsihànaka. It may easily be supposed, therefore, that for many years before I left Madagascar, the drawing-board was always in use, and two or three designs were generally in hand.

One more little project of mine, happily accomplished before leaving the island in 1915, may be mentioned before concluding this part of the chapter.

For nearly forty years after the Memorial Churches were completed, there was no inscription of any kind, either inside the buildings or outside of them to show *why* they were built, *whom* they commemorated, or who *gave money* for their erection, etc. Long ago I felt that this was a defect that ought to be remedied ; and twenty or thirty years ago I made drawings for suitable monuments in each of the four churches, varied in design according to the style of each building. These drawings were brought home twice, when I returned to England on furlough. But each time I found that the L.M.S. was then pressed with financial difficulties, so that I dared not appeal to the Directors for money to erect these monuments.

But soon after I went back to Madagascar, in December 1909, for what I knew would be my last (my sixth) period of service, I felt that it was " now or never," and that if I did not get such monuments erected before I finally left the island, in all probability they would never be erected at all. Now it happened that Mr. Sidney J. W. Clark, an enthusiastic supporter (and critic) of missions, paid us a visit soon after our return to Madagascar ; so I made bold


L M S
TO THE GLORY OF GO
AND TO THE LASTING MEMORY
MANY MALAGASY CHRISTIA
WHO, NEAR THIS PLACE,
SUFFERED BONDS AND IMPRISONMENT
FOR THE GOSPEL,
THIS CHURCH, BUILT BY THE GIFTS OF
ENGLISH CHRISTIANS,
was dedicated on Jan 22nd 1867
GEO. COUSINS Missionary
RATSILAINGA Pastor
JAS. SIBREE Architect
HO VONINAHITR' ANDRIAMANITRA
SY HO FAHATSIAROVANA
NY KRISTIANA MALAGASY MARO
IZAY, TAKAIKIN' ITY FITOERANA ITY,
NIARITRA GADRA SY TRANO MAIZINA
NOHO NY FILAZANTSARA,
ity Trano ity dia naorina tamin' ny VOLA
NOMEN' NY KRISTIANA ENGLIS
THIS MONUMENT WAS ERECTED AT THE COST OF SIDNEY J.W. CLARK
OCT. 1911
Wm. EVANS Missy.
RAINIMANKAOLA and J. RABETAFIKA Pastors
J.S. Des.
TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND TO THE LASTING MEMORY OF
ANDRIANTSIHAMBA, RAMITRAHO,
ANDRIAMPANIRY AND RAMANANDALANA,
WHO FOR THEIR FIDELITY TO CHRIST
WERE BURIED ALIVE CLOSE TO THIS PLACE
ON 28th MARCH 1849
THIS CHURCH BUILT BY THE GIFTS OF
ENGLISH CHILDREN
WAS DEDICATED ON 15 SEPT. 1870.
J. PEARSE MISSY.
RAINIJESY PASTOR.
T. ROBINS
HO VONINAHITR' ANDRIAMANITRA
ANDRIANTSIHAMBA, RAMITRAHO
ANDRIAMPANIRY SY RAMANANDALANA
NO NODORANA VELONA TETO
TAMIN' NY 28 MARCH 1849
ITY TRANO ITY DIA NAORINA TAMIN' NY VOLA
NY NATOKANA TAMIN' NY 15 SEPT. 1870
THIS MONUMENT WAS ERECTED AT THE COST OF J.H. CORNISH OF BRIDGEWATER
IN MEMORY OF HIS MOTHER JANE CORNISH OF TAUNTON.

AMBÀTONAKÀNGA FÀRAVÒHITRA

TWO OF THE MARTYR MONUMENTS IN THE MEMORIAL CHURCHES

to ask him to give me ten pounds to put up the first monument of the four in the Ambàtonakànga church. He willingly complied, and said, "As soon as it is completed and fixed in its place, have a photograph made, send it to the *L.M.S. Chronicle* for reproduction, and appeal for money to complete the other three." I followed his advice; the first monument was finished and erected, the photograph was taken and inserted in the *Chronicle,* and the appeal was made. Within a very short time, friends at Lancaster, Bradford, and Bridgewater responded, each sending me ten pounds; and the monuments were duly completed and fixed. But a little time afterwards I received a fifth ten pounds from Wellington, New Zealand, and I immediately thought, "This fifth donation should be used for a memorial to the first four missionaries, who brought the Gospel to the Malagasy, and also to Mr. Ellis, who did so much for them."

The generous donor in New Zealand readily agreed to my proposal, and so two monuments, very similar in general design, are placed in the Ambàtonakànga church, one on each side of the apse arch. On one side, the Malagasy, who were laden with heavy chains in the first little chapel close by, preparatory to being killed in various cruel ways, are commemorated; on the other side, the names of David Jones, David Griffiths, David Johns, and Joseph John Freeman, and William Ellis are cut in the stonework, and what they did for Madagascar briefly described.

The monument at the Ambòhipòtsy church gives prominence to the name of Rasalàma, the protomartyr of Madagascar, and the names of eleven other Christians who afterwards suffered death at the same spot are also engraved in the stone.

At Ampàmarìnana, the church built close to the summit of "the Rock of Hurling," the monument commemorates the names of fourteen Malagasy who were thrown over the precipice on March 28, 1849. The church was opened for worship on the same day of the same month, twenty-five years after the event of which it is a lasting memorial.

The monument at the Fàravòhitra church shows the names of four brave Malagasy, who suffered on that very spot, being burnt alive on the same day that the fourteen were killed at Ampàmarìnana.

On the four first monuments the inscriptions are both in English and Malagasy; but on the fifth, commemorating the English missionaries, Malagasy only is employed, as I could not find space for an English inscription as well. The general appearance of two of the five memorials will be seen from the illustration.

I certainly felt great satisfaction that before leaving the country I had thus been able to carry out my long-cherished wish to leave permanent memorials of those who sealed their faith with their blood soon after the introduction of the Gospel into their country. We English people cannot visit such places as the Lady Chapel in Southwark Cathedral, or Smithfield, or the Martyr Memorial at Oxford, and many another spot, without emotion and gratitude to God for the courage and fidelity of our Protestant martyrs, who won for us our religious liberty. And may we not hope that in future years, when the whole of the great island has become Christianized, Malagasy will come from all parts of Madagascar, and as they read the names of Rasalàma and many others who "followed in her train" in self-sacrifice, will also thank God for those noble men and women who went before them, and who laid down their lives for the sake of Christ and the Gospel?

I shall be pardoned, I hope, if I felt proud and thankful that I had been permitted to take a rather prominent part in building the Memorial Churches, and in securing in each of them an enduring record of the purpose for which they were erected, together with the names of those who suffered for their faith engraved in lasting granite, and are thus handed down to future generations.

I look forward with hope and confidence to the progress of the Malagasy churches in the years to come; and I believe that they will show yet greater zeal and enthusiasm in the spreading of the Gospel in the still heathen districts of the great island.

When I look back at the native churches of fifty to sixty years ago and compare them with those of the present day, I can say with confidence that there has been great and encouraging advance in almost every direction. In more reverent worship, in order and in arrangement of the services, in instructive and earnest preaching, in more efficient Sunday Schools, in self-support and in self-control, in women's work in the church, in greatly improved church buildings, and also in missionary effort—in all these directions there has been undoubted progress. But for some time to come the Malagasy Church will need guidance and advice from European missionaries, especially in supervision, in College and High School teaching, and in literary work. And foreign missionaries also will be needed to initiate and to sustain aggressive work among the still unenlightened tribes of Malagasy.

Some years ago a question was sent round to the various fields of the L.M.S., to which we were asked to reply, and it was this : " Are the Heathen hungering for the Gospel ? " In my answer to this query, I felt unable to say " yes," as far as the great majority of heathen people in Madagascar were concerned. At the same time, one was glad to recognize the fact that both before the introduction of Christianity into the island and since then, there have been, and no doubt still are, individual instances of an earnest desire for something better than their native superstitions and knowledge supplied. Many of their proverbs undoubtedly show that in early times some Malagasy were " feeling after God, if haply they might find Him." Among the Sihànaka people there was a widespread tradition that " in the latter days there shall come some white people, who shall do good to the land ; and blessed shall he be who lives in that day." The first native missionary who went to that tribe said that many people spoke of it to him, and seemed to think that his preaching the Gospel to them was the beginning of the fulfilment of the prophecy. Amidst much darkness and evil, there were evidently here and there some Malagasy who " feared God and worked righteousness," according to their light.

In narrating a missionary journey undertaken in 1919 by my friend, the Rev. W. Kendall Gale, he gives very interesting, indeed pathetic, accounts of the desire of the people in the northern central provinces to hear what he had to say to them. Again and again he was entreated to come again and teach them ; repeatedly he was begged to send them a teacher. Indeed, that very journey was undertaken because he could no longer refuse to send someone to teach them " the good word " (*filazantsàra*). A man came from a far distant village several days' journey north, and when Mr. Gale said he could send no one to them the man came again, pressing his request more earnestly, so that at last the missionary felt it was a divine call, and he could no longer refuse to hear the cry, " Come over and help us ! " and therefore went himself to see them and place an evangelist among them. And it was on this journey that the people on many places on the road there and back begged for instruction. With regard, therefore, to that part of Madagascar at least, I think we might now give an affirmative answer to the question sent us several years ago, viz. " Are the Heathen hungering for the Gospel ? "

In a recent report Mr. Gale says that three sides of his district border on heathenism untouched, a wide stretch of country that has never heard the name of Jesus. Yet the wonderful progress made in certain directions can be seen in other statements made by him as to one section of his work. He says : " The original five churches in my part of the Bézànozàno province have increased to twenty-five. In a village where, seven years ago, I was welcomed by only fifteen people, there is now a church with 1,140 adherents."

What the Gospel is now doing for heathen tribes in Madagascar may be further seen from what Mr. Gale also says : " As regards a village called Fáravòhitra in the Bézànozàno province, this was one of the darkest spots in the whole district, for it took me twelve years to get a congregation going here. You will understand also how deep-seated was the heathenism of the place when I tell you that five days out of the seven were taboo, not a stroke of any kind of work being done at their land except on two days of the week ! *Fàdy* or taboo is a desperate obstacle to Christian effort among this tribe, blocking one at every turn, and thwarting the most earnest attempts to elevate the people. Now, however, they have a place to worship in, a hut of rushes, certainly, but a place where they can meet with God. After the services were started we met with the most determined opposition from a band of native dancers, a practice vitally associated with heathenism, and a means of gain. To-day this opposition no longer exists, the band being now most zealous in church attendance, and keen on having a new and proper sanctuary.

"Another village, Antànditra, gave me perhaps the heartiest welcome I have ever had, for not only the whole village, but the entire district, came to greet me, many coming from quite a long distance. Yet when I first came this way twelve years ago I should almost have been prepared to maintain that nothing could ever elevate the people of this and two other neighbouring villages, so utterly degraded did they seem, so hopelessly ignorant and devil-ridden. To-day, the whole district is *en fête* for my coming; they are neatly and cleanly clad; they have built their pastor a very good house; a handsome new church is in course of erection, and a school-house is to be put up next year. Their present chapel could not hold half the people who wished to attend the services, so I had to stand at the door while preaching, and giving the gramophone tunes, in order that all might see and hear. The Gospel is here doing its beneficent work, civilizing the savage, purifying the home, and saving the sin-soaked souls of these Bézànozàno people."

During a long missionary journey in the south-eastern provinces my companion and I were struck several times with the evident pleasure with which the people listened to our message. We felt this especially at a little village on the shore of a great river which we were following down to the coast. When we had pitched our tent for the night and had arranged our baggage, a small crowd of wondering people gathered around us, for they had never seen a white man before. So we sat down and began to talk to them of that "faithful saying," worthy of their and all men's "acceptation," "the old, old story," old to us, but perfectly new to them, "of Jesus and His love." And how those poor folks listened! At length, when we ceased, an old woman got up and said, "I am old and white-headed, as you see; I have lived long in the world and have heard many strange things; but we have never heard before now of such things as you have told us; they are all new and wonderful, but it makes us *glad* to hear them; tell us again! tell us again!" That, I believe, is what many others would say if the glad tidings were made known to them;

and we rejoice that the Centenary meetings of 1920 stirred up the Malagasy churches to answer more fully the call from their heathen fellow-countrymen, and that they will not rest until the name of the Saviour is made known throughout the whole of Madagascar.

Most of this book was written two or three years ago, but since then events have occurred in Madagascar which should be briefly noticed, so as to bring the information already given as to church matters up to date.

The most important occurrence during that period was the Centenary of the commencement of mission work in the Capital and the central province in 1820 by the arrival of the Rev. David Jones at Antanànarìvo in the month of October of that year. The celebration of that event evoked remarkable interest and enthusiasm among the Malagasy Christians, especially among those connected with the London Missionary Society. A deputation from the Directors of the Society was sent to convey their congratulations to the native churches, and representatives of the French Protestant Society, and of the Norwegian societies also, came to take part in the proceedings.

Preparations for this event had been begun two years previously by meetings held at Tamatave on August 18, 1918, to commemorate the arrival there of David Jones and Thomas Bevan in August 1818; and the Imèrina churches met soon afterwards to decide upon what should be done to celebrate the still greater event of 1820. Besides the holding of numerous meetings in the central provinces, it was decided (1) to prepare special literature on the story of the Hundred Years; (2) to raise £6,000 for the erection of boys' and girls' hostels, and premises for the Y.M.C.A. in Antanànarìvo; and (3) the formation of an exhibition of Arts and Crafts, including a collection of portraits of L.M.S. missionaries to Madagascar. But more important still, it was resolved that there should be a general visitation of villages, and a special evangelistic crusade; the result of which was that in many of the churches a revival took place, and there were great ingatherings of young people, so that during a few months no fewer than 3,400 people were added to the church membership.

The Centenary celebrations lasted over a week, and included Sunday services, meetings on the Monday in seven of the largest churches in the Capital, Sunday School gatherings, and an exhibition of lantern slides, showing the progress of Christianity in Madagascar. But the most remarkable of them all was an open-air meeting in the ground around the Memorial Church of Ambàtonakànga and in the streets surrounding it, where it was believed that 6,000 people were present. To this immense audience addresses were given in the Welsh, French, and Norwegian languages, of course translated also into the vernacular. This meeting was held by special permission of the Governor-General, since no open-air meetings are allowed by French law. Overflow meetings were held at the same time in three large churches, so that probably 10,000 people took part in that afternoon's services. The Union meetings of the three missions (L.M.S., F.P.S., F.F.M.A.) were also held, including the usual five meetings, as described in Chapter VIII of the *Isan-ènim-bòlana*. In the southern province of Bétsiléo a similar series of Centenary meetings was carried through, with the same enthusiasm and success. One result of the Centenary was that the religious life of the Malagasy has been deepened; and another was the promotion of a fuller union of the evangelical missions at work in Madagascar.

The decade of 1911 to 1920 showed a great advance in the substitution in a great number of cases of a trained pastor for each church, instead of several village churches being grouped together under the care of an evangelist. These men for many years did invaluable service ; but many of the Malagasy churches have become able and willing to support a pastor for themselves, so that even since 1908 the contributions for the support of native pastors have trebled in amount, a notable advance in self-support. But the latest *Ten Years' Review* of the mission faithfully points out also the weaknesses of the Malagasy church under the following heads : (1) Their deficiency in earnest spiritual life ; (2) the need of more brotherly feeling ; (3) the tendency to change the nature of Sunday services and to give spectacular performances ; (4) the low standard of preaching ; (5) the poor quality of candidates for the ministry ; and (6) the need of much greater missionary zeal for the extension of the Gospel among the heathen Malagasy.

Against these "Shadows of Christian and Church life in Madagascar," however, there must also be put the following "Lights" in the picture,[1] as follows: (1) The Church in Madagascar looms very large in the life of the people, and is a real power in the land; (2) immense advances have been made in the outward form and manifestation of Christianity in the way of buildings and their fittings, etc., due to the increased liberality of the people; (3) there has been real progress in the organization of the native Church; (4) there is much greater interest in literature, as shown by the sale of books and periodicals; and (5) there is a very earnest desire for spiritual advance among those who form the *élite* of the churches. In addition to the above marks of progress, the Sunday Schools and Christian Endeavour societies have greatly increased in number, and have much improved in their organization and working, while their spiritual results have been undoubtedly great. Malagasy women have come more and more to the front in the life and work of the churches; and by their Dorcas societies, they do much in the visitation of the poor around them, in visiting and helping the sick and the bereaved, in raising funds for church purposes, and in carrying on evangelistic work in the country districts.

I was engaged in missionary work abroad for more than fifty-two years, and I believe in it profoundly. It is undeniably *the* great enlightening, truly civilizing, and most beneficent agency in the world. Even if there were no life to come and no soul to be saved, Christian missions might well claim the support of benevolent people, whatever their belief, or no-belief. But, as professedly Christian people, we have higher motives still:—

Gratitude ought to impel us, for are we not ourselves, as a nation, and whatever there is in us of mercy and goodness, the fruit of those early missionaries' labour, who brought the Gospel to our shores many centuries ago? It is not civilization, but Christianity, to which we owe it all. "Freely we have received": ought we not to "freely give"?

Compassion also should lead us to send the Gospel to the heathen, for it is only those who have lived in a heathen country, in close contact with the people, who can fully understand the cruelties, the abominations, the wrongs, which heathenism inflicts upon its votaries.

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[1] The original title proposed for this book was "Lights and Shadows of Christian and Church Life in Madagascar."

Above all, *Obedience* to the last command of our ascending Lord demands that we carry out His commission to His Church to " go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." That command has never been repealed. It is as binding now upon all who call Him " Lord and Master " as it was upon the first band of His disciples.

It is my earnest hope that what is written in this book may strengthen the faith of its readers in the power of the Gospel, as seen in one mission field, and so impel them to do more to extend the Kingdom of Heaven in the world, and to hasten the time when Jesus Christ shall be acknowledged everywhere as " Lord of all."

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